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THE

WORKS

OF

W. CHILLINGWORTH, M. A.

THE

WORKS

OF

W. CHILLINGWORTH, M. A.

Isaac. Casaubon. *in Epist. ad Card.* **Perron.** *Regis* JACOBI *nomine*

Rex arbitratur, rerum absolute necessariarum ad salutem non magnu
numerum. Quare existimat ejus Majestas, nullam ad ineundam conc
breviorem viam fore, quam si diligenter separentur necessaria a non nec
et ut in necessariis conveniat, omnis opera insumatur: In non necessarii
tati Christianæ locus detur. Simpliciter necessaria Rex appellat, quæ
presse verbum Dei præcipit credenda faciendave, vel ex verbo Dei nec
consequentia vetus Ecclesia elicuit.—Si ad decidendas hodiernas Contr
hæc distinctio adhiberetur, et jus divinum a positivo seu Ecclesiastico
separaretur; non videtur de iis quæ sunt absolute necessaria, inter pios
deratos viros, longa aut acris contentio futura. Nam et pauca illa sunt, u
dicebamus, et fere ex æquo omnibus probantur, qui se Christianos dici po
Atque istam distinctionem Sereniss. Rex tanti putat esse momenti ad min
Controversias, quæ hodie Ecclesiam Dei tantopere exercent, ut omnium
studiosorum judicet officium esse, diligentissime hanc explicare, docere, u

WORKS

OF

WM. CHILLINGWORTH, M.A.

IN THREE VOLUMES:

VOL. I.

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NEW YORK

TO THE

MOST HIGH AND MIGHTY

PRINCE CHARLES,

By the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. &c.

May it please your most Excellent Majesty,

I PRESENT with all humility, to your most sacred hands, a defence of that cause, which is, and ought to be, infinitely dearer to you, than all the world; not doubting but upon this Dedication I shall be censured for a double boldness: both for undertaking so great a work, so far beyond my weak abilities; and again, for presenting it to such a patron, whose judgment I ought to fear more than any adversary. But, for the first, it is a satisfaction to myself, and may be to others, that I was not drawn to it out of any vain opinion of myself, (whose personal defects are the only thing which I presume to know) but undertook it in obedience to him who said, *Tu conversus confirma fratres*, not to St. Peter only, but to all men: being encouraged also to it by the goodness of the cause, which is able to make a weak man strong. To the belief hereof I was not led partially, or by chance, as many are, by the pre-

credible the wiser sort of them should believe this their own horrid assertion, that a God of goodness should damn to eternal torments those that love him and love truth, for errors which they fall into through human frailty! but this they must say, otherwise their only great argument from their damning us, and our not being so peremptory in damning them, because we hope unaffected ignorance may excuse them, would be lost: and, therefore, they are engaged to act on this tragical part, to fright the simple and ignorant, as we do little children, by telling them that bites, which we would not have them meddle with. And truly that herein they do but act a part, and know themselves to do so, and deal with us here, as they do with the King of Spain at Rome, whom they accurse and excommunicate for fashion-sake on Maundy Thursday, for detaining part of St. Peter's patrimony, and absolve him without satisfaction on Good Friday: methinks their faltering and inconstancy herein makes it very apparent: for though, for the most part, they speak nothing but thunder and lightning to us, and damn us all without mercy or exception; yet sometimes, to serve other purposes, they can be content to speak to us in a milder strain, and tell us, as my adversary does more than once, That they allow protestants as much charity as protestants allow them. Neither is this the only contradiction which I have discovered in this uncharitable work; but have shewed that, by forgetting

grounds he builds upon, he hath saved me the labour of a confutation; which yet I have not in any place found any such labour or difficulty, but that it was undertakable by a man of very mean, that is, of my abilities. And the reason is, because it is truth I plead for; which is so strong an argument for itself, that it needs only light to discover it; whereas it concerns falsehood and error to use disguise and shadowings, and all the fetches of art and sophistry; and, therefore, it stands in need of abler men to give that a colour at least which hath no real body to subsist by. If my endeavours in this kind may contribute any thing to this discovery, and the making plain that truth (which my charity persuades me the most part of them disaffect, only because it hath not been well represented to them) I have the fruit of my labour, and my wish, who desire to live to no other end, than to do service to God's church, and your most sacred Majesty, in the quality of

Your Majesty's

Most faithful subject,

And most humble, and devoted Servant,

W. CHILLINGWORTH.

PREFACE

TO THE

NINTH EDITION.

THE repeated complaints in public print, as well as in private conversation, of the very blameable incorrectness of most of the foregoing editions of this work, having made an exact and careful review of the whole absolutely necessary; it is thought proper to give an account, in few words, what has been done to this purpose in the Edition now before the reader.

The book was first published at Oxford in the year 1638; and, meeting with an extraordinary reception at its first appearance, was printed some months after at London in the same year. This second impression received some alterations, very probably, from the hand of the Author, he being then alive. The Third Edition, which was published in 1664, seems to be the last that was printed with any degree of care; there being in it some small corrections, which appear to have been made on purpose, and are not improper,

pressions have no alterations but were made for the worse by the carelessness of the printers.

From the three first, therefore, this Edition has been prepared. The whole has been collated with all possible application, and no pains or industry have been wanting to do justice to a work so truly valuable.

The book of *Charity Maintained by Catholics* has been also compared with like diligence with the first Edition, published by *Mr. Knot* himself; it being plain, from the sincere and generous temper of Mr. Chillingworth, that his desire and endeavour was, That his adversary might be used with all candour and fair dealing, and that his arguments might be set in a proper light.

And, lastly, the Sermons and additional Discourses are printed from the best Editions of those pieces; the former, from that printed in 1684; the latter, from that in 1688, which was the first time these last were made public.

Upon the whole, as it has been entrusted to an experienced and careful hand to correct the sheets from the press, who has used a more than ordinary application on his part, it is hoped that, abating a very few typographical errors, which the best performances from the press are not without, the reader will here meet with what the undertaker proposed—a genuine, correct, and beautiful Edition of the Works of Mr. Chillingworth.

The annexed subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England, added

Chap. III.

Answer III.

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ADVERTISEMENT

CONCERNING THE

TENTH EDITION.

In this Edition we have now first added the Life of our celebrated Author, carefully collected from the best authorities, with a history of the controversies he was engaged in: by the Rev. Mr. Birch. His Letters, which have hitherto been improperly omitted, are inserted: so that we can now assure the Reader, he has a complete collection of Mr. Chillingworth's Works.

Sept. 1, 1742.

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That the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental, is neither pertinent, nor true in our present controversy: and that the catholic visible church cannot err, in either kind of the said points 331

Answer III.

Wherein is maintained, That the distinction between points fundamental and not fundamental, is in this present controversy good and pertinent: and that the catholic church may err in the latter kind of the said points 365

LIFE

OF

MR. CHILLINGWORTH.

Mr. William Chillingworth was son of William Chillingworth, citizen, and afterwards mayor of Oxford, and was born in St. Martin's parish in that city, in October 1602, and on the last of that month received baptism there.* William Laud, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, and then fellow of St. John's College, and master of arts,† was his godfather.‡ He became a scholar of Trinity College, under the tuition of Mr. Robert Skinner, on the 2d of June, 1618, being then about two years standing in the University.§ June the 28th, 1620, he took the degree of bachelor of arts;‖ and March the 16th, 1623-4, that of master;¶ and June the 10th, 1628, became fel-

* Wood, Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. col. 40. 2d edit. Lond. 1721.

† Diary of Archbishop Laud, published by Mr. H. Wharton, p. 1, 2.

‡ Wood, ubi supra, col. 42.

§ Id. col. 40.

‖ Id. Fasti Oxon. vol. i. col. 215.

¶ Id. ibid. col. 226.

low of his college.* "He was then," says Mr. Wood,† "observed to be no drudge to his study; but, being a man of great parts, would do much in a little time when he settled to it." He did not confine his studies to divinity, but applied himself with great success to mathematics; and, what shews the extent of his genius, he was esteemed likewise a good poet, in which capacity he is mentioned by Sir John Suckling, in his Sessions of the Poets.‡ His intimate friends were Sir Lucius Cary, afterwards Lord Viscount Falkland; Mr. John Hales, of Eton, &c. but more particularly Mr. Gilbert Sheldon, who succeeded Dr. Juxon in the see of Canterbury.§ The study and conversation of the University scholars at that time turned chiefly upon the controversies between the church of England and that of Rome; and the great liberty, which had been allowed the popish missionaries in the end of the reign of King James I. being continued under King Charles I. upon the account of his marriage with Henrietta, daughter to Henry IV. of France.‖ There was among them a famous Jesuit, who went under the name of John Fisher, though his true name was John Perse, or Percey,¶ and was very busy in

* Wood, Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. col. 40.

† Ibid.

‡ Fragmenta aurea. A Collection of all the incomparable Pieces written by Sir John Suckling, p. 7. edit. London, 1646.

§ Des Maizeaux's Historical and Critical Account of the Life and Writings of William Chillingworth, p. 3. edit. London, 1725, in octavo.

making converts, particularly at Oxford; and, a tacking Mr. Chillingworth upon the necessity an infallible living judge in matters of faith, tl latter forsook the communion of the church England, and with an incredible satisfaction mind embraced the Romish religion,* and soo after wrote the following letter to his friend M Gilbert Sheldon.†

"GOOD MR. SHELDON,

"PARTLY mine own necessities and fear and partly charity to some others, have drawn n out of London into the country. One particul cause, and not the least, was the news of your sic ness, which had I found it had continued with y with any danger, no danger of my own should ha kept me from you. I am very glad to hear of yo recovery, but sorry that your occasions do dra you so suddenly to London. But, I pray, lea a direction with Charles Green, where you ma be spoke with, and how I may send to you; ar you shall very shortly hear further from m Meanwhile let me intreat you to consider most s riously of these two quæries:

"1. Whether it be not evident from Scriptur and fathers, and reason; from the goodness of Go and the necessity of mankind, that there must l some one church infallible in matters of faith?

"2. Whether there be any society of men the world, besides the church of Rome, that eith can, upon good warrant, or indeed at all, challeng

* Wood, Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. col. 10.

† Des Maizeaux, ubi supra, p. 7.

to itself the privilege of infallibility in matter of faith?

"When you have applied your most attentive consideration upon these questions, I do assure myself your resolution will be affirmative in the first, and negative in the second. And then the conclusion will be, that you will approve and follow the way, wherein I have had the happiness to enter before you; and should think it infinitely increased, if it would please God to draw you after.

"I rest your assured friend, &c."

which that prelate was then chancellor,) in order to complete the important work, in which he was engaged, a free inquiry into religion. At last, after a thorough examination, the protestant principles appearing to him the most agreeable to the Holy Scripture and reason, he declared for them; and about the year 1634 wrote a confutation of the motives, which had induced him to go over to the church of Rome. This paper is now lost. It is true, we have a paper of his on the same subject, first published in 1687, in the Additional Discourses of Mr. Chillingworth; but it seems to be written upon some other occasion, probably at the desire of some of his friends.*

As in his forsaking the church of England, as well as in his return to it, he was solely influenced by a sincere love of truth, so he constantly persevered in that excellent temper of mind; and even after his return to protestantism, he made no scruple to examine the grounds of it, as appears by a letter of his to Dr. Sheldon, containing some scruples he had about leaving the church of Rome and returning to the church of England. These scruples, which he freely declared to his friends, seem to be the occasion of a groundless report, that he had turned papist a second time, and then protestant again.†

His returning to the protestant religion making a great deal of noise, he was engaged in several disputes with those of the Romish religion, and particularly with Mr. John Lewgar, Mr. John Floyd, a Jesuit, who went under the name of Da-

* Des Maizeaux, ubi supra, p. 13—17.

† Id. ibid, p. 18. and remark [F.]

niel, or *Dan. à Jesu*,* and Mr. White, author of the Dialogues published under the name of Rushworth; with whom, at the desire of Lord George Digby, afterwards earl of Bristol, he had a conference at the lodgings of Sir Kenelm Digby, a late convert to the church of Rome.† But in 1635 he was engaged in a work which gave him a far greater opportunity to confute the principles of that church, and to vindicate the protestant religion, upon the following occasion. A Jesuit, who went by the name of Edward Knott, though his true name was Matthias Wilson,‡ had published in 1630, in 8vo. a little book, called, Charity mistaken, with the Want whereof Catholickes are unjustly charged, for affirming, as they do with Grief, that Protestancy unrepented destroies Salvation. This was answered by Dr. Christopher Potter, provost of Queen's College, in Oxford; and his answer came out in 1633 with this title: Want of Charitie justly charged on all such Romanists, as dare (without Truth or Modesty) affirme, That Protestancie destroyeth Salvation. In Answer to a late Popish Pamphlet, intituled, Charity mistaken, &c. The Jesuit replied in 1634 under this title: Mercy and Truth, or Charity maintayned by Catholiques. By way of Reply upon an Answere lately framed by Dr. Potter to a Treatise, which had formerly proved, that Charity was mistaken by Protestants; with the Want whereof Catholiques are unjustly charged for affirming, that Protest-

* Id. ibid. p. 39, 40.

† Id. p. 40—43, and Letters between the Lord George Digby, and Sir Kenelm Digby, Knt. concerning Religion, p. 84, 85. edit. London, 1651.

ancy unrepented destroyes Salvation. Devided into two Parts.—Mr. Chillingworth undertaking to answer that Reply, and Mr. Knott being informed of his design, resolved to prejudice the public both against our Author and his book, in a libel, intitled, A Direction to be observed by N. N. if hee meane to proceede in answering the Booke, intitled, Mercy and Truth, or Charity maintained by Catholickes, &c. printed in 1636, in 8vo. pag. 42. Permissu Superiorum.—In this piece he represents Mr. Chillingworth as a Socinian; whose Answer was very near finished in the beginning of the year 1637; and, having been examined, at Archbishop Laud's request, by Dr. John Prideaux, afterwards bishop of Worcester, Dr. Richard Baylie, vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, and Dr. Samuel Fell, Lady Margaret's professor of divinity, it was published with their approbation in the latter end of that year, with this title: The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation; or, an Answer to a Booke, intitled, Mercy and Truth, or Charity maintained by Catholickes. Which pretends to prove the contrary. By William Chillingworth, Master of Arts of the University of Oxford.—This book was received with a general applause; and, what perhaps never happened to any other controversial work of that bulk, two editions were published within less than five months. On the other hand, Mr. Knott, seeing that he had not been able to deter our Author from publishing his Answer, tried once more to prejudice the public against it; wherein he was seconded by some Jesuits: for in 1638, Mr. Knott published a pamphlet, intitled, Christianity maintained, or a Discovery of sundry Doctrines tend-

ing to the Overthrowe of the Christian Religion, contayned in the Answere to a Book, intituled, Mercy and Truth; or, Charity maintayned by Catholickes: printed at St. Omer's, in 4to. pag. 86. In this piece* he promises a larger volume in answer to Mr. Chillingworth. To this pamphlet is subjoined a little piece under the title of Motives maintained; or, a Reply unto Mr. Chillingworth's Answere to his own Motives of his Conversion to the Catholicke Religion. The next pamphlet against our Author was likewise printed at St. Omers in 1638, in 4to. pag. 193, with this title: The Church conquerant over human Wit; or, the Churches Authority demonstrated by M. William Chillingworth (the Proctour for Wit against her) his perpetual Contradictions in his Booke, intituled, The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation. The author was a Jesuit, called John Floyd, who, in 1639, published likewise another piece, in 4to. pag. 104, intitled, The totall Summe; or, no Danger of Damnation unto Roman Catholiques for any Errours in Faith; nor any Hope of Salvation for any Sectary whatsoever, that doth knowingly oppose the Doctrine of the Roman Church. This is proved by the Confessions and Saying of Mr. Chillingworth his Booke. The third pamphlet, which appeared against Mr. Chillingworth, was printed in 1639, most probably at St. Omers, in 4to. pag. 158, and intitled, The Judgment of an University-Man concerning M. William Chillingworth his late Pamphlet, in Answere to Charity maintayned. It was written by Mr. William Lacy, a Jesuit. To this piece is

subjoined another, intitled, Heautomachia. Mr. Chillingworth against Himself, pag. 46. It hath no title page, nor preface, being the sequel of the other, and printed at the same time. The style is also the same. In 1652, nine years after our Author's death, Mr. Knott published a large answer to him, intitled, Infidelity unmasked; or, the Confutation of a Booke published by M. William Chillingworth, under this title, The Religion of Protestants a safe Way to Salvation: printed at Ghent, in 4to. pag. 949, besides the Preface and Index.

While Mr. Chillingworth was employed in the excellent work abovementioned, he wrote a letter to one of his friends, who had desired to know, what judgment might be made of Arianism from the sense of antiquity. It is without date; and, the cover being lost, it doth not appear to whom it was written. The original is in the library of the Royal Society, and is as follows:

" DEARE HARRY,

" I AM very sorry it was my ill fortune not to see thee, the day that I went out of Oxford; otherwise I should have thanked thee very heartily for the favour thou didst the night before, especially for Mr. Coventrye's company and discourse, whose excellent witt I doe very much admire; and had I so much interest in him as you have, I should desire him often (though I hope I need not) to remember what our Saviour sayes, 'To whom much is given, of them much shall be required.'

" Mr. Taylour did much confirme my opinion of his sufficience: but let mee tell you in your care.

meethinkes he wants much of the ethicall part of a discourser, and slights too much many times the arguments of those he discourses with. But this is a fault he would quickly leave, if he had a friend, that would discreetly tell him of it. If you or Mr. Coventry would tell him, that you heard one, that knowes him, magnifye him exceedingly for other thinges, but censure him for this, you might doe him a very friendly office; and my writing to you thus much gives you grownd enough to say so truely. But you must not give the least suspicion, that I am the man, and therefore not doe it yet a good while.

" When Dr. Sheldon comes to Oxford, I will be there againe, and then will be very ready to doe any service in the businesse you imparted to mee.

" I was mistaken in my directing you to Eusebius for the matter you wott of. You shall find it in a witnesse much farther from exception herein then Eusebius, even Athanasius himselfe, the greatest adversary of that doctrine, and Hilary, who was his second. See the first in Ep. de Synodis Arim. et Seleuc. p. 917. D. tom i. Edit. Paris, 1627. See the second de Synodis, fol. 97. In the first you shall find, that the eighty fathers, which condemned Samosatenus, affirm'd expressely, that the Sonne is not of the same essence of the Father; which is to contradict formally the councell of Nice, which decreed the Sonne co-essentiall to the Father. In the second you shall find these wordes to the same purpose, *Octoginta Episcopi olim respuerunt τὸ Homousion.* See also, if you please, Justin. cont. Tryph. p. 283. 356, 357. Tertull. against Praxeas, c. 9. Novatian de Trinit. in fine, who is joyn'd with Tertullian. Athanas.

Ep. de Fide Dion. Alex. t. i. p. 551. Basil, t. ii. p. 802, 803, edit. Paris, 1618. See St. Hierom, Apol. 2. cont. Ruffinum, t. ii. p. 329. Paris, 1579. See Petavius upon Epiph. his Panar. ad Hæ. 69. quæ est. Arii, p. 285; and consider how well he cleares Lucian the martyr from Arianisme, and what he there confesses of all the ancient fathers.

"If you could understand French, I would referre to Perron, p. 633, of his reply to King James, where you should find these wordes: 'If a man should demand of an Arrian, if he would submitt to the judgment of the church of the ages præcedent to that of Constantine and Marcian, he would make no difficulty of it, but would presse himselfe, that the controversye might be decided by that little, which remaines to us of the authors of that time. For an Arrian would find in Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, which remaine of those ages, that the Sonne is the instrument of the Father; that the Father commanded the Sonne in the works of creation; that the Father and the Sonne are *aliud et aliud;* which thinges he that should now hold, now when the language of the church is more examin'd, would be esteem'd a very Arrian.'

"If you reade Bellarmine touching this matter, you should find, that he is troubled exceedingly to find any tolerable glosses for the speeches of the fathers before the councell of Nice, which are against him; and yet he conceales the strongest of them; and, to counterpoyse them, cites authors, that have indeed ancient names, but such, whom he himselfe has stigmatized for spurious, or doubtfull, in his book De Script. Eccles.

"Were I at leysure, and had a little longer time, I could referre you to some, that acknowledge Origen's judgment to be also against them in this matter. And Fishar, in his Answere to Dr. White's Nine Questions,* has a place almost parallel to that abovecited out of Perron.

"In a word, whosoever shall freely and impartially consider of this thing, and how on the other side the ancient fathers weapons against the Arrians are in a manner onely places of Scripture (and those now for the most part discarded as impertinent and unconcluding), and how in the argument drawne from the authority of the ancient fathers, they are almost alwayes defendants, and scarse ever opponents; he shall not choose but confesse, or at least be very inclinable to beleeve, that the doctrine of Arrius is eyther a truth, or at least no damnable hæresy.

"But the carryer stayes for my letter, and I have now no more time than to adde, that I am thy very true and loving friend, &c.

"See Facundus Hermianensis, lib. 10. c. 15. Remember alwayes the wordes of our Saviour, 'If you will doe the will of my Father, you shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.'

"If you can send me Mr. Digges's speech. I prythee goe to Dr. Littleton, and desire him to send mee all that he has of Vorstius: for in the Epistles of his, which I borrowed of him, he referres mee to some other bookes of his, which I shall have especiall occasion to use; especially his booke against Pistorius the Jesuit."

In the year 1635, Sir Thomas Coventry, lord

keeper of the great seal, offering Mr. Chillingworth some preferment, he refused to accept it, on account of his scruples with regard to the subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles of the church of England;* and wrote a letter upon this subject to Dr. Sheldon. Mr. Des Maizeaux observes,† that he had two transcripts of it, one of which (that hath a postscript) was communicated to him by Dr. White Kennet, lord bishop of Peterborough; to which, and to the copy of the other letter of Mr. Chillingworth, upon his going over to the Romish religion, his Lordship had subjoined the following memorandum: "To the copies of these two letters to Mr. Gilbert Sheldon and Dr. Sheldon, Mr. Wharton, who procured the transcripts, gave this attestation under his own hand—*Ex autographis literis penes Danielem Sheldon Armigerum, archiepiscopi nepotem.* It is dated from Tew,‡ Septemb. 21, 1635, and directed—To the right worshipfull and his much honoured friend Dr. Sheldon, and is as follows, with the various readings of the other transcript communicated to Mr. Des Maizeaux, noted below.

"GOOD DR. SHELDON,

"I DO here send you news, as unto my best friend, of a great and happy victory, which at length, with extream difficultie, I have scarcely obtained over the onely enemie, that can hurt me, that is, myselfe.

* Des Maizeaux, ubi supra, p. 58, &c.

† P. 86.

‡ In Oxfordshire, the seat of Lucius, Lord Viscount Falkland.

"Sir, so it is, that though I am in debt to yourselfe and others of my friends above twenty pounds more than I know how to pay; though I am in want of many conveniences; though in danger of falling into a chronicall infirmitie of my body; though in another thing, which you perhaps guesse at what it is, but I will not tell you, which would make more joyfull of preferment than all these things (if I could come honestly by* it); though money comes to me from my father's purse like blood from his veins, or from his heart; though I am very sensible, that I have been too long already an unprofitable burden to my Lord, and must not still continue so; though my refusing preferment may perhaps (which fear, I assure you, does much afflict me) be injurious to my friends and intimate acquaintance, and prejudicial to them in the way of theirs; though conscience of my own good intention and desire† suggests unto me many flattering hopes of great possibilitie‡ of doing God and his church service, if I had the preferment, which I may fairly hope for; though I may justly fear, that by refusing those preferments, which I sought for, I shall gain the reputation of weaknesse and levity, and incur their displeasure, whose good opinion of me, next to God's favour, and my own good opinion of myselfe, I do esteem and desire above all things: though all these, and many other *terribiles visu formæ*, have represented themselves to my imagination in the most hideous manner that may be; yet I am at length firmly and unmoveably resolved, if I can have no preferment without

* to. † intentions and desires. ‡ possibilities.

subscription, that I neither can, nor will have any.

"For this resolution I have but one reason against a thousand temptations to the contrary; but it is ἓν μέγα, against which if all the little reasons in the world were put in the balance, they would be lighter than vanity. In brief, this it is: as long as I keep that modest and humble assurance of God's love and favour, which I now enjoy, and wherein I hope I shall be daily more and more confirmed; so long, in despite of all the world, I may, and shall, and will be happy. But if I once lose this, though all the world should conspire to make me happy, I shall and must be extremely miserable. Now this inestimable jewel, if I subscribe (without such a declaration as will make* the subscription no subscription,) I shall wittingly, and willingly, and deliberately throw away. For though I am very well perswaded of you and my other friends, who do so with a full perswasion, that you may do it lawfully; yet the case stands so with me, and I can see no remedy but for ever it will do so, that if I subscribe, I subscribe my own damnation. For though I do verily believe the church of England a true member of the church; that she wants nothing necessary to salvation, and holds nothing repugnant to it; and had thought, that to think so had sufficiently qualified me for a subscription; yet now I plainly see, if I will not juggle with my conscience, and play with God Almighty, I must forbear.

"For, to say nothing of other things, which I

* as makes.

have so well considered, as not to be in a state to sign them, and yet not so well as to declare myself against them; two points there are, wherein I am fully resolved, and therefore care not who knows my mind. One is, that to say, the fourth commandment is a law of God appertaining to Christians is false and unlawfull. The other, that the damning sentences in St. Athanasius's Creed (as we are made to subscribe it) are most false, and also in a high degree presumptuous and schismaticall. And therefore I can neither subscribe, that these things are agreeable† to the word of God, seeing I believe they are certainly repugnant to it; nor that the whole Common Prayer is lawful to be used, seeing I believe these parts of it certainly unlawfull; nor promise, that I myselfe will use it, seeing I never intend either to read these things, which I have now‡ excepted against, or to say amen to them.

"I shall not need to intreat you, not to be offended with mee for this my most honest, and (as I verily believe) most wise resolution; hopeing rather, you will do your endeavour, that I may neither be honest at so dear a rate, as the losse of preferment, nor buy preferment at so much dearer a rate, the losse of honesty.

"I think myselfe happy, that it pleased God, when I was resolved to venture upon a subscription, without full assurance of the lawfulnesse of it, to cast in my way two unexpected impediments to divert me from accomplishing my resolution. For I profess unto you, since I entertained it, I have never enjoyed quiet day nor

night, till now that I have rid myself of it again. And I plainly perceive, that if I had swallowed this pill, howsoever guilded over with glosses and reservations, and wrapt up in conserves of good intentions and purposes; yet it would never have agreed nor stayed with me, but I would have cast it up again, and with it whatsoever preferment I should have gained with it as the wages of unrighteousness; which would have been a great injury to you and to my Lord Keeper. Whereas now *res est integra;* and he will not lose the gift of any preferment by bestowing it on mee, nor have any engagement to Mr. Andrewes for me.

" But however* this would have succeeded, in case I had then subscribed, I thank God, I am now so resolved, that I will never do that while I am living and in health, which I would not do, if I were dying; and this I am sure I would not do. I would never do any thing for preferment, which I would not do but for preferment; and this, I am sure, I should not do. I will never† undervalue the happiness, which God's love brings to mee with it, as to put it to the least adventure in the world, for the gaining of any worldly happinesse. I remember very well, *quærite primum regnum Dei, et cætera omnia adjicientur tibi:* and therefore whenever‡ I make such a preposterous choice, I will give you leave to think I am out of my wits, or do not believe in God, or at least am so unreasonable, as to do a thing, in hope I shall be sorry for it afterwards, and wish it undone.

" It cannot be avoided, but my Lord of Canter-

* howsoever. † never so. ‡ whensoever.

bury must come to know this my resolution; and, I think, the sooner the better. Let me entreat you to acquaint him with it (if you think it expedient); and let me hear from you as soon as possibly you can. But when you write, I pray remember, that my foregoing preferment (in this* state wherein I am) is grief enough to me; and do not you add to it, by being angry with me for doing that, which I must do, or be miserable.

"I am your most loving and true servant, &c.

"So much of my defence of Dr. Potter as I have done, I intend to review and perfect before I proceed; and, if it shall be thought fit to publish it, annexing a discourse to this effect, that if this be answered, all the rest is so; which by the strict dependance of that which follows on that which goes before, I shall be able very easily to demonstrate.

"Direct your letters to me at my father's house in Oxford, and it will be sufficient.

tent upon a full inquiry into the sense of the Articles, every new examination afforded him new scruples. Dr. Sheldon's paper is as follows:*

"God forbid I should persuade any to do against his conscience: be it in itself good or bad, it must be a sin to lie.

"It was in a third person; else I would not have told you what I did.

"I must deal plainly with you; I am much afraid it will ruin you here, and not advantage you at the last day.

"I put not the title of conscience upon an humour of contradiction.

"*Accordinge*] if not against, for 'tis according to Scripture, that the church hath power to establish ceremonie or doctrine, if occasion require, not against the Scripture.

"The end of these general forms of peace, if capable of any construction, lies against the papists.

"No evangelical counsels, as the papists, such as presuppose a fulfilling of the law, and going beyond it, to satisfy and merit for us, that's according to Scripture.

"In this sense the article condemns them. Consider it well.

"No such offering of Christ in the Scripture, where you will find it once afford for all: in that manner they did it, against whom the article was framed; taken with all aggravating circumstances of corporal presence, as if another satisfaction for sin: the consequences, which may be drawn from transubstantiation, amount to little less than blasphemy.

* Des Maizeaux, ubi supra, p. 103, 104.

"Works done by bare nature are not meritorious *de congruo*: nature of sin they must have, if sin be in them; and so it is, for *malum ex qualibet causa*. Unless a downright Pelagian, you may give it a fayre, and safe, and true interpretation.

"Upon these reasons, I presume, did that reverend prelate Andrews, and that learned Mountague subscribe, when they publickly taught evangelical councels in their writings. What you have sent to me in a third person, &c. Be not forward, nor possessed with a spirit of contradiction. Thus you may——"

However at last Mr. Chillingworth surmounted his scruples; and, being promoted to the chancellorship of the church of Sarum, July 20th, 1638, with the prebend of Brixworth, in Northamptonshire annexed to it, he complied with the usual subscription.

About the same time he was appointed master of Wigstan's Hospital in Leicester; "both which," says Mr. Wood,* "and perhaps other preferments, he kept to his dying day." In 1640, he was deputed by the Chapter of Salisbury for their proctor in convocation. In 1642, he was put into the roll with some others by his Majesty to be created doctor of divinity; but he came not to take that degree, nor was he diplomated.† At the siege of Gloucester, begun August 10, 1643 he was in the King's army before that city; and observing, that they wanted materials to carry on the siege, he suggested the making of some engines after the manner of the Roman *testudi*

* Athen. Oxon. vol. ii. col. 42.

† Id. Fasti Oxon. vol. ii. col. 30.

cum pluteis, in order to storm the place.* That siege being raised by the Earl of Essex, and the war continuing with great vigour on each side, the King appointed the Lord Hopton general of his troops in the west, who forced Arundel Castle, in Sussex, to surrender: but that Castle was retaken by Sir William Waller, and Mr. Chillingworth, among the rest, made prisoner of war; who, out of respect to my Lord Hopton, "had accompanied him in that march, and being indisposed by the terrible coldness of the season, chose to repose himself in that garrison, till the weather should mend."† Mr. Chillingworth's illness increased to such a degree, that not being able to go to London with the garrison, he was conveyed to Chichester; which favour he obtained at the request of his great adversary, Mr. Francis Cheynell, a bigotted presbyterian divine, who accidentally met him in Arundel Castle, and frequently visited him at Chichester till he died. He hath given us an account of our Author's sickness, and his own behaviour towards him in a book, printed at London, 1644, in 4to. intitled, Chillingworthi novissima; or, the Sicknesse, Heresy, Death, and Buriall, of William Chillingworth, (in his own phrase) Clerk of Oxford, and in the Conceit of his fellow Souldiers the Queen's arch Engineer and grand Intellgiencer. Set forth in a Letter to his eminent and learned Friends: a Relation of his Apprehension at Arundell; a Discovery of his Errours in a briefe Catechisme; and a short Ora-

* Rushworth, Histor. Collect. vol. ii. part 3. ad ann. 1643. tom. iv. p. 288, 289.

† Clarendon, History of the Rebellion, B. viii. tom. iv. p. 472, 473.

tion at the Buriall of his Hereticall Book. By Francis Cheynell, late Fellow of Merton Colledge. Published by Authority.—Mr. Chillingworth died about January 30, 1643-4, and was interred in the Cathedral of Chichester.

Besides his Works printed in this volume,* he wrote several other pieces, not yet published, which were among the manuscripts of Mr. Henry Wharton, bought by Dr. Tenison, archbishop of Canterbury, and presented to the Lambeth Library; some of which have been mentioned above. I shall give an account of them all from the Catalogue of those manuscripts drawn up by Mr. Wharton himself, who observes,† that the volume marked M. is *Volumen Chartaceum* in fol. containing A Collection of Papers formerly belonging to Archbishop Laud, many of them wrot with his own Hand, but most of them endorsed with his Hand; together with some Papers of the Archbishops Sheldon and Sancroft, and many of Mr. Chillingworth.—And after having set down part of the contents of that volume, he adds, Several Papers of Mr. William Chillingworth, viz.

" Mr. Peake's Five Questions proposed to Mr. Chillingworth, about the Nature of Faith, and the Resolution and Consequence of the Faith of Protestants.

" Mr. Chillingworth's Answer to Mr. Peake's Questions: first draught imperfect.

" Mr. Chillingworth's Answer to the same: being complete and perfect.

" The beginning of a Treatise against the Scots. By Mr. Chillingworth.

* This alludes to the *folio* edition of his Works.

† Catalogus MSS. H. Wharton, in Biblioth. Lambeth. ad vol. M.

" Passages extracted out of the Declarations the Scots. By Mr. Chillingworth.

" Observations upon the Scottish Declaratio By Mr. Chillingworth.

" A Treatise of the Unlawfulnesse of resisting t lawful Prince, although most impious, tyrannic and idolatrous. By Mr. Chillingworth.

" A Letter of Mr. Chillingworth, excusing h writing against the Rebels.*

" Notes of Mr. Chillingworth concerning Goc universal Mercy in calling Men to Repentance.

" A Problematical Tentamen of Mr. Chillin worth against punishing Crimes with Death Christian Societies :† cancelled.

" A Letter of Mr. J. to Mr. Chillingworth of t Imperfection of Naturall Religion and Reason, wit out the Assistance of Revelation: wrot 1637.

" A short Discourse of the Nature of Faith. I Mr. Chillingworth.

" A larger Discourse of the Nature of Faith. I Mr. Chillingworth.

" Of the Absurdity of Departing from the Chur of England, for Want of Succession of visible Pr fessors in all Ages. By Mr. Chillingworth.

" A brief Answer to several Texts of Scriptur alledged to prove the Church to be one, visibl universal, perpetual, and infallible. By Mr. Ch lingworth.

" A Letter of Dr. Sheldon to Mr. Chillingwort to satisfy his Scruples about subscribing.‡

" Letter of Mr. Chillingworth to Dr. Sheldo

* Printed in Mr. Des Maizeaux's

containing some Scruples about leaving the Church of Rome, and returning to the Church of England.

" Letter of Mr. Chillingworth to Dr. Sheldon, containing his Scruples about Subscription, and the reason of them."*

PREFACE

TO THE AUTHOR OF

CHARITY MAINTAINED:

WITH AN

ANSWER TO HIS PAMPHLET,

ENTITULED,

A DIRECTION TO N. N.

SIR,

UPON the first news of the publication of your book, I used all diligence with speed to procure it; and came with such a mind to the reading of it, as St. Austin, before he was a settled catholic, brought to his conference with Faustus, the Manichee. For, as he thought, that if any thing more than ordinary might be said in defence of the Manichean doctrine, Faustus was the man from whom it was to be expected: so my persuasion concerning you was,—*Si pergama dextra defendi possunt, certe hac defensa videbo.* For I conceived that, among the champions of the Roman church, the English in reason must be the best, or equal to the best, as being by most expert masters trained up purposely for this war, and perpetually practised in it. Among the English I saw the Jesuits would yield the first place to none; and men so wise in their generation as the

Jesuits were, if they had any Achilles among them, I presumed, would make choice of him for this service. And, besides, I had good assurance, that in the framing of this building, though you were the only architect, yet you wanted not the assistance of many diligent hands to bring you in choice materials towards it; nor of many careful and watchful eyes to correct the errors of your work, if any should chance to escape you. Great reason therefore had I to expect great matters from you, and that your book should have in it the spirit and elixir of all that can be said in defence of your church and doctrine; and to assure myself that, if my resolution not to believe it, were not built upon the rock of evident grounds and reasons, but only upon some sandy and deceitful appearances, now the wind and storm and floods were coming, which would undoubtedly overthrow it.

surance that it is so. But I, for my part, unless I deceive myself, was, and still am so affected, as I have made profession, not willing, I confess, to take any thing upon trust, and to believe it without asking myself why? no, nor able to command myself (were I never so willing) to follow, like a sheep, every shepherd that should take upon him to guide me; or every flock, that should chance to go before me: but most apt and most willing to be led by reason to any way, or from it, and always submitting all other reasons to this one—God hath said so, therefore it is true. Nor yet was I so unreasonable, as to expect mathematical demonstrations from you in matters plainly incapable of them, such as are to be believed, and, if we speak properly, cannot be known; such therefore I expected not. For, as he is an unreasonable master, who requires a stronger assent to his conclusions than his arguments deserve; so I conceive him a froward and undisciplined scholar, who desires stronger arguments for a conclusion than the matter will bear. But, had you represented to my understanding such reasons of your doctrine, as, being weighed in an even balance, held by an even hand, with those on the other side, would have turned the scale, and have made your religion more credible than the contrary; certainly I should have despised the shame of one more alteration, and with both mine arms, and with all my heart, most readily have embraced it: such was my expectation from you, and such my preparation, which I brought with me to the reading of your book.

3. Would you know now what the event was, what effect was wrought in me, by the perusal

and consideration of it? To deal truly and ingenuously with you, I fell somewhat in my good opinion, both of your sufficiency and sincerity; but was exceedingly confirmed in my ill opinion of the cause maintained by you. I found every where snares that might entrap, and colours that might deceive, the simple; but nothing that might persuade, and very little that might move an understanding man, and one that can discern between discourse and sophistry: in short, I was verily persuaded, that I plainly saw and could make it appear to all dispassionate and unprejudicate judges, that a vein of sophistry and calumny did run clean through it from the beginning to the end. And letting some friends understand so much, I suffered myself to be persuaded by them, that it would not be either unproper for me, or unacceptable to God, nor peradventure altogether unserviceable to his church, nor justly offensive to you (if you indeed were a lover of truth, and not a maintainer of a faction) if setting aside the second part, which was in a manner wholly employed in particular disputes, repetitions and references, and in wranglings with Dr. Potter about the sense of some supernumerary quotations, and whereon the main question no way depends; I would make a fair and ingenuous answer to the first, wherein the substance of the present controversy is confessedly contained; and which, if it were clearly answered, no man would desire any other answer to the second. This therefore I undertook with a full resolution to be an adversary to your errors, but a friend and servant to your person: and so much

the severer and more rigid adversary I was to your errors.

4. In this work my conscience bears me witness, that I have, according to your advice, "proceeded always with this consideration, that I am to give a most strict account of every line, and word, that passeth under my pen:" and therefore have been precisely careful, for the matter of my book, to defend truth only, and only by truth: and then scrupulously fearful of scandalizing you or any man with the manner of handling it. From this rule, sure I am, I have not willingly swerved in either part of it; and, that I might not do it ignorantly, I have not only myself examined mine own work (perhaps with more severity than I have done your's, as conceiving it a base and unchristian thing to go about to satisfy others with what I myself am not fully satisfied); but have also made it pass the fiery trial of the exact censures of many understanding judges, always heartily wishing, that you yourself had been of the *quorum*. But they who did undergo this burthen, as they wanted not a sufficiency to discover any heterodox doctrine, so I am sure, they have been very careful to let nothing slip dissonant from truth, or from the authorized doctrine of the church of England: and therefore, whatsoever causeless and groundless jealousy any man may entertain concerning my person, yet my book, I presume, in reason and common equity, should be free from them; wherein I hope, that little or nothing hath escaped so many eyes, which being weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, will be found too light: and in this hope I am much confirmed, by your strange carriage of yourself in this whole business.

For though by some crooked and sinister arts, you have got my answer into your hands, now a year since and upwards, as I have been assured by some that profess to know it, and those of your own party; though you could not want every day fair opportunities of sending to me, and acquainting me with any exceptions, which you conceived might be justly taken to it, or any part of it (than which nothing could have been more welcome to me); yet hitherto you have not been pleased to acquaint me with any one: nay more, though you have been, at sundry times, and by several ways, intreated and solicited, nay pressed and importuned by me, to join with me in a private discussion of the controversy between us, before the publication of my Answer (because I was extremely unwilling to publish any thing which had not passed all manner of trials; as desiring, not that I, or my side, but that truth, might overcome on which side soever it was) though I have protested to you, and set it under my hand (which protestation by God's help I would have made good), if you, or any other, who would undertake your cause, would give me a fair meeting, and choose out of your whole book any one argument whereof you was most confident, and by which you would be content the rest should be judged of, and make it appear, that I had not, or could not, answer it, that I would desist from the work which I had undertaken, and answer none at all: though by all the arts which possibly I could devise, I have provoked you to such a trial; and, in particular, by assuring you, that if you refused it, the world should be informed of your tergiversation: notwithstanding all this, you have perpetually and

obstinately declined it; which, to my understanding, is a very evident sign, that there is not any truth in your cause, nor (which is impossible there should be) strength in your arguments: especially considering what our Saviour hath told us, "Every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved; but he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

5. In the meanwhile, though you despaired of compassing your desire this honest way; yet you have not omitted to tempt me, by base and unworthy considerations, to desert the cause which I had undertaken; letting me understand from you, by an acquaintance common to us both, how that "in case my work should come to light, my inconstancy in religion (so you miscall my constancy in following that way to heaven, which for the present seems to me to be the most probable) should be to my great shame painted to the life; that my own writings should be produced against myself; that I should be urged to answer my own Motives against Protestantism; and that such things should be published to the world touching my belief (for my painter I must expect should have great skill in perspective) of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of our Saviour, and all supernatural verities, as should endanger all my benefices, present and future: that this warning was given me not out of fear of what I could say, (for that catholicks, if they might wish any ill would beg the publication of my book, for respects obvious enough); but out of a mere charitable desire of my good and reputation: and that all this was

said upon a supposition that I was answering or had a mind to answer Charity Maintained; if not, no harm was done." To which courteous premonition, as I remember, I desired the gentleman, who dealt between us, to return this answer, or to this effect:—that I believed the doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of our Saviour, and all other supernatural verities revealed in Scripture, as truly and as heartily as yourself, or any man; and therefore herein your charity was very much mistaken; but, much more, and more uncharitably, in conceiving me to be a man that was to be wrought upon with these *terribiles visu formæ*, those carnal and base fears which you presented to me; which were very proper motives for the devil and his instruments to tempt poor-spirited men out of the way of conscience and honesty, but very incongruous, either for teachers of truth, to make use of, or for lovers of truth (in which company I had been long agon matriculated) to hearken to with any regard. But if you were indeed desirous, that I should not answer Charity Maintained, one way there was, and but one, whereby you might obtain your desire; and that was, by letting me know when and where I might attend you; and by a fair conference, to be written down on both sides, convincing mine understanding (who was resolved not to be a recusant if I were convicted) that any one part of it, any one argument in it, which was of moment and consequence, and whereon the cause depends, was indeed unanswerable. This was the effect of my answer, which I am well assured was delivered: but reply from you I received none but this, that you would have conference with me but in print: and soon

after finding me of proof against all these batteries, and thereby (I fear) very much enraged, you took up the resolution of the furious goddess in the poet, madded with the unsuccessfulness of her malice,

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo!

6. For certainly, those indign contumelies, that mass of portentous and execrable calumnies, wherewith in your pamphlet of Directions to N. N. you have loaded not only my person in particular, but all the learned and moderate divines of the church of England, and all protestants in general; nay, all wise men of all religions but your own, could not proceed from any other fountain.

7. To begin with the last: you stick not, in the beginning of your first chapter, to fasten the imputation of atheism and irreligion upon all wise and gallant men that are not of your own religion. In which uncharitable and unchristian judgment, void of all colour or shadow of probability, I know yet by experience, that very many of the bigots of your faction are partakers with you. God forbid I should think the like of you! Yet, if I should say, that in your religion there want not some temptations unto, and some principles of irreligion and atheism, I am sure I could make my assertion much more probable than you have done, or can make, this horrible imputation.

8. For to pass by, first, that which experience justifies, that where and when your religion hath most absolutely commanded, there and then atheism hath most abounded. To say nothing, secondly, of your notorious and confessed forging of so many false miracles, and so many lying legends,

which is not unlikely to make suspicious men to question the truth of all; nor to object to you, thirdly, the abundance of your weak and silly ceremonies, and ridiculous observances in your religion; which, in all probability, cannot but beget secret contempt and scorn of it in wise and considering men; and, consequently, atheism and impiety, if they have this persuasion settled in them (which is too rife among you, and which you account a piece of wisdom and gallantry), that if they be not of your religion, they were as good be of none at all: nor to trouble you, fourthly, with this, that a great part of your doctrine especially in the points contested, makes apparently for the temporal ends of the teachers of it; which yet, I fear, is a great scandal to many *beaux esprits* among you: only I should desire you to consider attentively, when you conclude so often from the differences of protestants, that they have no certainty of any part of their religion, no not of those points wherein they agree; whether you do not that, which so magisterially you direct me not to do, that is, proceed "a destructive way, and object arguments against your adversaries, which tend to the overthrow of all religion?" And whether, as you argue thus, "protestants differ in many things, therefore they have no certainty of any thing:" so an atheist or sceptic may not conclude as well; Christians and the professors of all religions differ in many things, therefore they have no certainty in any thing. Again, I shall desire you to tell me ingenuously, whether it be not too probable, that your portentous doctrine of transubstantiation, joined with your forementioned persuasion of, "no papists no Christians," hath brought a great many others, as well as himself, to Averroes'

resolution, *Quandoquidem Christiani adorant quod comedunt, sit anima mea cum philosophis?* Whether your requiring men, upon only probable and prudential motives, to yield a most certain assent unto things in human reason impossible; and telling them, as you do too often, that they were as good not believe at all, as believe with any lower degree of faith, be not a likely way to make considering men scorn your religion (and consequently all, if they know no other) as requiring things contradictory, and impossible to be performed? Lastly, whether your pretence, that there is no good ground to believe Scripture, but your church's infallibility, joined with your pretending no ground for this but some texts of Scripture, be not a fair way to make them that understand themselves, believe neither church nor Scripture?

9. Your calumnies against protestants in general are set down in these words: (chap. ii. § 2.) "The very doctrine of protestants, if it be followed closely, and with coherence to itself, must of necessity induce Socinianism. This I say confidently; and evidently prove, by instancing in one error, which may well be termed the capital and mother-heresy, from which all other must follow at ease; I mean their heresy in affirming, that the perpetual visible church of Christ, descended by a never-interrupted succession from our Saviour to this day, is not infallible in all that it proposeth to be believed as revealed truths. For if the infallibility of such a public authority be once impeached, what remains, but that every man is given over to his own wit and discourse? And talk not here of Holy Scripture: for if the true church may err, in defining what Scriptures be

canonical, or in delivering the sense and meaning thereof; we are still devolved, either upon the private spirit (a foolery now exploded out of England, which finally leaving every man to his own conceits, ends in Socinianism) or else upon natural wit and judgment, for examining and determining what Scriptures contain true or false doctrine and, in that respect, ought to be received or rejected. And, indeed, take away the authority of God's church, no man can be assured, that any one book, or parcel of Scripture, was written by Divine inspiration; or that all the contents are infallibly true; which are the direct errors of Socinians. **If it were but for this reason alone, no man, who regards the eternal salvation of his soul, would live or die in protestancy, from which so vast absurdities as these of the Socinians must inevitably follow. And it ought to be an unspeakable comfort to all us catholics, while we consider, that none can deny the infallible authority of our church, but jointly he must be left to his own wit and ways; must abandon all infused faith, and true religion, if he do but understand himself right."**—In all which discourse, the only true word you speak is, "this I say confidently:" as for "proving evidently," that I believe you reserved for some other opportunity: for the present I am sure you have been very sparing of it.

10. You say, indeed, confidently enough, that "the denial of the church's infallibility is the mother-heresy, from which all other must follow at ease." Which is so far from being a necessary truth, as you make it, that it is indeed a manifest falsehood. Neither is it possible for the wit of man, by any good, or so much as probable con-

sequence, from the denial of the church's infallibility, to deduce any one of the ancient heresies, or any one error of the Socinians, which are the heresies here entreated of. For who would not laugh at him that should argue thus: neither the church of Rome, nor any other church, is infallible; *ergo*, the doctrine of Arius, Pelagius, Eutyches, Nestorius, Photinus, Manichæus, was true doctrine? On the other side it may be truly said, and justified by very good and effectual reason, that he affirms with you, the pope's infallibility puts himself into his hands and power, to be led by him, at his ease and pleasure, into all heresy, and even to hell itself; and cannot with reason say (so long as he is constant to his grounds) *Domine, cur ita facis?* but must believe white to be black, and black to be white; virtue to be vice, and vice to be virtue; nay (which is a horrible, but a most certain truth) Christ to be antichrist, and antichrist to be Christ, if it be possible for the pope to say so: which, I say, and will maintain, however you daub and disguise it, is indeed to make men apostatize from Christ to his pretended vicar, but real enemy. For that name, and no better (if we may speak truth without offence), I presume he deserves, who, under pretence of interpreting the law of Christ (which authority, without any word of express warrant, he has taken upon himself), doth in many parts evacuate and dissolve it: so dethroning Christ from his dominion over men's consciences, and, instead of Christ, setting up himself; inasmuch as he that requires, that his interpretations of any law should be obeyed as true and genuine, seem they to men's understandings never so dissonant and discordant from it (as the

Bishop of Rome does), requires, indeed, that his interpretations should be laws; and he that is firmly prepared in mind to believe and receive all such interpretations without judging of them, and though to his private judgment they seem unreasonable, is indeed congruously disposed to hold adultery a venial sin, and fornication no sin, whensoever the pope and his adherents shall so declare. And whatsoever he may plead yet, either wittingly or ignorantly, he makes the law and the lawmaker both stales, and obeys only the interpreter. As if I should pretend, that I should submit to the laws of the King of England, but should indeed resolve to obey them in that sense which the King of France should put upon them, whatsoever it were; I presume every understanding man would say, that I did indeed obey the King of France, and not the King of England. If I should pretend to believe the Bible, but that I would understand it according to the sense which the chief Mufti should put upon it; who would not say, that I were a Christian in pretence only, but indeed a Mahometan?

dite and ready for use, by being contracted t
pope) she may do what she pleaseth with it.
that hath lived in the primitive church, would
have thought it as utterly improbable, that
they should have brought in the worship of im
and picturing of God, as now it is that
should legitimate fornication? Why may we
think, they may in time take away the w
communion from the laity, as well as they
taken away half of it? Why may we not th
that any text, and any sense, may not be
corded as well as the whole fourteenth chapt
the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthia
reconciled to the Latin service? How is it p
ble any thing should be plainer forbidden tha
worship of angels in the Epistle to the Colossi
than the teaching for doctrines men's comm
in the Gospel of St. Mark? And, therefore, se
we see these things done, which hardly any
would have believed that had not seen them,
should we not fear, that this unlimited power
not be used hereafter with as little moderat
seeing devices have been invented how men
worship images without idolatry, and kill inno
men, under pretence of heresy, without mur
Who knows not, that some tricks may no
hereafter devised, by which lying with other m
wives shall be no adultery, taking away o
men's goods no theft? I conclude, therefore,
if Solomon himself were here, and were to de
mine the difference, which is more likely t
mother of all heresy, the denial of the church
the affirming of the pope's infallibility, tha
would certainly say, "This is the mother, give
the child."

12. You say again, confidently, that if this infallibility be once impeached, every man is given over to his own wit and discourse: which if you mean discourse not guiding itself by Scripture, but only by principles of nature, or perhaps by prejudices and popular errors, and drawing consequences not by rule, but chance, is by no means true: if you mean by discourse, right reason grounded on Divine revelation and common notions written by God in the hearts of all men, and deducing, according to the never-failing rules of logic, consequent deductions from them; if this be it which you mean by discourse, it is very meet and reasonable and necessary, that men, as in all their actions, so especially in that of the greatest importance, the choice of their way to happiness should be left unto it; and he that follows this in all his opinions and actions, and does not only seem to do so, follows always God; whereas he that followeth a company of men, may ofttimes follow a company of beasts: and in saying this, I say no more than St. John to all Christians in these words: "Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits, whether they be of God, or no." And the rule he gives them to make this trial by, is, to consider whether they confess Jesus to be the Christ; that is, the guide of their faith, and Lord of their actions; not, whether they acknowledge the pope to be his vicar: I say no more than St. Paul in exhorting all Christians "to try all things, and hold fast that which is good:" than St. Peter, in commanding all Christians to be ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them: than our Saviour

they blindly follow blind guides, both leaders and followers should fall into the ditch: and again, in saying even to the people, "Yea, and why of yourselves judge ye not what is right?" And though by passion, or precipitation, or prejudice, by want of reason or not using what they have, men may be, and are oftentimes, led into error and mischief; yet, that they cannot be misguided by discourse, truly so called, such as I have described, you yourself have given them security. For what is discourse, but drawing conclusions out of premises by good consequence? Now, the principles which we have settled, to wit, the Scriptures, are on all sides agreed to be infallibly true. And you have told us in the fourth chapter of this pamphlet, that "from truth no man can, by good consequence, infer falsehood:" therefore, by discourse no man can possibly be led to error; but if he err in his conclusions, he must of necessity either err in his principles (which here cannot have place) or commit some error in his discourse; that is, indeed, not discourse, but seem to do so.

13. You say, thirdly, with sufficient confidence, that "if the true church may err in defining what Scriptures be canonical, or in the delivering the sense thereof, then we must follow either the private spirit, or else natural wit and judgment; and by them examine what scriptures contain true or false doctrine, and in that respect ought to be received or rejected." All which is apparently untrue; neither can any proof of it be pretended. For though the present church may possibly err in her judgment touching this matter, yet have we other directions in it besides the private spirit and the examination of the contents (which latter way

may conclude the negative very strongly, to wit, that such or such a book cannot come from God, because it contains irreconcileable contradictions; but the affirmative it cannot conclude, because the contents of a book may be all true, and yet the book not written by Divine inspiration); other directions therefore I say we have besides either of these three, and that is, the testimony of the primitive Christians.

14. You say, fourthly, with convenient boldness, that "this infallible authority of your church being denied, no man can be assured, that any parcel of Scripture was written by Divine inspiration:" which is an untruth, for which no proof is pretended; and besides, void of modesty, and full of impiety: the first, because the experience of innumerable Christians is against it, who are sufficiently assured, that the Scripture is divinely inspired, and yet deny the infallible authority of your church, or any other: the second, because if I cannot have ground to be assured of the Divine authority of Scripture, unless I first believe your church infallible, then I can have no ground at all to believe it; because there is no ground, nor can any be pretended, why I should believe your church infallible, unless I first believe the Scripture Divine.

15. Fifthly and lastly, you say with confidence in abundance, that "none can deny the infallible authority of your church, but he must abandon all infused faith and true religion, if he do but understand himself;" which is to say, agreeable to what you had said before, and what out of the abundance of your heart you speak very often, that all Christians besides you are open fools, or

concealed atheists. All this you say with notable confidence (as the manner of sophisters is, to place their confidence of prevailing in their confident manner of speaking); but then for the evidence you promised to maintain this confidence, that is quite vanished and become invisible.

16. Had I a mind to recriminate now and to charge papists (as you do protestants) that they lead men to Socinianism, I could certainly make a much fairer shew of evidence than you have done: for I would not tell you, you deny the infallibility of the church of England; *ergo*, you lead to Socinianism, which yet is altogether as good an argument as this; protestants deny the infallibility of the Roman church; *ergo*, they induce Socinianism: nor would I resume my former argument, and urge you, that by holding the pope's infallibility, you submit yourself to that capital and mother-heresy, by advantage whereof, he may lead you at ease to believe virtue vice, and vice virtue; to believe antichristianity Christianism, and Christianity antichristianism: he may lead you to Socinianism, to Turcism, nay, to the devil himself if he have a mind to it: but I would shew you, that divers ways the doctors of your church do the principal and proper work of the Socinians for them, undermining the doctrine of the Trinity, by denying it to be supported by those pillars of the faith, which alone are fit and able to support it, I mean Scripture, and the consent of the ancient doctors.

17. For Scripture, your men deny very plainly and frequently, that this doctrine can be proved by it. See, if you please, this plainly taught, and urged very earnestly, by Cardinal Hosius, De

Author. Sac. l. 3. p. 53. By Gordonius Huntlæus, tom. i. Controv. 1. De verbo Dei, C. 19. By Gretserus and Tannerus, in Colloquio Ratisbon; and also by Vega, Possevin, Wickus, and others.

18. And then for the consent of the ancients: that that also delivers it not; by whom are we taught, but by papists only? Who is it that makes known to all the world, that Eusebius, that great searcher and devourer of the Christian libraries, was an Arian? Is it not your great Achilles, Cardinal Perron, in his third book and second chapter of his Reply to King James? Who is it that informs us that "Origen" (who never was questioned for any error in this matter in or near his time) "denied the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Ghost?" Is it not the same great Cardinal, in his book of the Eucharist against M. du Plessis, l. 2. c. 7? Who is it that pretends, that "Irenæus hath said those things, which he that should now hold, would be esteemed an Arian?" Is it not the same person, in his Reply to King James, in the fifth chapter of his fourth observation? and doth he not in the same place peach Tertullian also, and in a manner give him away to the Arians? and pronounce generally of the fathers, before the council of Nice, that "Arians would gladly be tried by them?" and are not your fellow Jesuits also, even the prime men of your order, prevaricators in this point as well as others? Doth not your friend Mr. Fisher, or Mr. Floyd, in his book of the Nine Questions proposed to him by King James, speak dangerously to the same purpose, in his discourse Of the Resolution of Faith, towards the end? Giving us to understand, that "the new reformed Arians bring very many testimonies of the

ancient fathers, to prove, that in this point they did contradict themselves, and were contrary one to another; which places whosoever shall read, will clearly see, that to common people they are unanswerable, yea, that common people are not capable of the answers that learned men yield unto such obscure passages." And hath not your great antiquary Petavius, in his notes upon Epiphanius, in Hær. 69. been very liberal to the adversaries of the doctrine of the Trinity, and in a manner given them for patrons and advocates, first, Justin Martyr, and then almost all the fathers before the council of Nice; whose speeches, he says, touching this point, *cum orthodoxæ fidei regula minime consentiunt?* Hereunto I might add, that the Dominicans and Jesuits between them in another matter of great importance, viz. God's prescience of future contingents, give the Socinians the premises out of which their conclusion doth unavoidably follow: for the Dominicans maintain, on the one side, that God can foresee nothing but what he decrees: the Jesuits, on the other side, that he doth not decree all things: and from hence the Socinians conclude (as it is obvious for them to do), that—he doth not foresee all things. Lastly, I might adjoin this, that you agree with one consent, and settle for a rule unquestionable, that no part of religion can be repugnant to reason; whereunto you in particular subscribe unawares in saying, "from truth no man can by good consequence infer falsehood;" which is to say, in effect, that reason can never lead any man to error. And after you have done so, you proclaim to all the world (as you in this pamphlet do very frequently) that, "if men follow their reason and

scourse," they will (if they understand themselves) be led to Socinianism. And thus you see with what probable matter I might furnish out and justify my accusation, if I should charge you with leading men to Socinianism; yet do I not conceive, that I have ground enough for this odious imputation. And much less should you have charged protestants with it, whom you confess to abhor and detest it, and who fight against it, not with the broken reeds, and out of the paper fortresses of an imaginary infallibility, which were only to make sport for their adversaries; but with the sword of the Spirit, the word of God; of which we may say most truly, what David said of Goliah's sword, offered him by Abimelech, *non est sicut iste*, "there is none comparable to it."

19. Thus protestants in general I hope are sufficiently vindicated from your calumny. I proceed now to do the same service for the divines of England; whom you question first in point of learning and sufficiency, and then in point of conscience and honesty, as prevaricating in the religion which they profess, and inclining to popery. Their learning (you say) consists only in "some superficial talent of preaching, languages, and elocution; and not in any deep knowledge of philosophy, especially of metaphysics; and much less of that most solid, profitable, subtle, and *(O rem ridiculam, Cato, et jocosam!)* succinct method of school-divinity." Wherein you have discovered in yourself the true genius and spirit of detraction. For taking advantage from that wherein envy itself cannot deny but they are very eminent, and which requires great sufficiency of substantial learning, you disparage them

as insufficient in all things else. As if, forsooth, because they dispute not eternally, *utrum chimera bombinans in vacuo, possit comedere secundas intentiones?* " whether a million of angels may not sit upon a needle's point?" Because they fill not their brains with notions that signify nothing, to the utter extermination of all reason and common sense, and spend not an age in weaving and unweaving subtle cobwebs, fitter to catch flies than souls, therefore they have no deep knowledge in the acroamatical part of learning. But I have too much honoured the poorness of this detraction to take notice of it.

20. The other part of your accusation strikes deeper, and is more considerable: and that tells us, that " protestantism waxeth weary of itself; that the professors of it, they especially of greatest worth, learning, and authority, love temper and moderation; and are at this time more unresolved where to fasten, than at the infancy of their church: that their churches begin to look with a new face: their walls to speak a new language: their doctrine to be altered in many things, for which their progenitors forsook the then visible church of Christ; for example, the pope not antichrist; prayer for the dead: *limbus patrum:* pictures: that the church hath authority in determining controversies of faith, and to interpret Scripture: about free-will, predestination, universal grace: that all our works are not sins: merit of good works: inherent justice: faith alone doth not justify: charity to be preferred before knowledge: traditions: commandments possible to be kept: that their Thirty-nine Articles are patient, nay ambitious of some sense wherein

they may seem catholic: that to allege the necessity of wife and children in these days, is but a weak plea for a married minister to compass a benefice: that Calvinism is at length accounted heresy, and little less than treason: that men in talk and writing use willingly the once fearful names of priests and altars: that they are now put in mind, that for exposition of Scripture, they are by canon bound to follow the fathers; which, if they do with sincerity, it is easy to tell what doom will pass against protestants, seeing by the confession of protestants, the fathers are on the papists' side, which the answerer to some so clearly demonstrated, that they remained convinced:" in fine, as the Samaritans saw in the disciples' countenances, that they meant to go to Jerusalem, so you pretend it is even legible in the foreheads of these men, that they are even going, nay, making haste to Rome. Which scurrilous libel, void of all truth, discretion, and honesty, what effect it may have wrought, what credit it may have gained with credulous papists (who dream what they desire, and believe their own dreams), or with ill-affected, jealous, and weak protestants, I cannot tell: but one thing I dare boldly say, that you yourself did never believe it.

21. For did you indeed conceive, or had any probable hope, that such men as you describe, men of worth, of learning, and authority too, were friends and favourers of your religion, and inclinable to your party; can any man imagine, that you would proclaim it, and bid the world take heed of them? *Sic notus Ulysses?* Do we know the Jesuits no better than so? What, are they turned prevaricators against their own fac-

tion? Are they likely men to betray and expose their own agents and instruments, and to awaken the eyes of jealousy, and to raise the clamour of the people against them? Certainly, your zeal to the see of Rome, testified by your fourth vow of special obedience to the pope, proper to your order, and your cunning carriage of all affairs for the greater advantage and advancement of that see, are clear demonstrations, that if you had thought thus, you would never have said so. The truth is, they that can run to extremes in opposition against you; they that pull down your infallibility, and set up their own; they that declaim against your tyranny, and exercise it themselves over others, are the adversaries that give you greatest advantage, and such as you love to deal with: whereas upon men of temper and moderation, such as will oppose nothing because you maintain it, but will draw as near to you, they that may draw you to them, as the truth will suffer them; such as require of Christians to believe only in Christ, and will damn no man nor doctrine without express and certain warrant from God's word; upon such as these you know not how to fasten: but if you chance to have conference with any such (which yet as much as possibly as you can you avoid and decline) you are very speedily put to silence, and see the indefensible weakness of your cause laid open to all men. And this, I verily believe, is the true reason that you thus rave and rage against them; as foreseeing your time of prevailing, or even of subsisting, would be short, if other adversaries gave you no more advantage than they do.

22. In which persuasion also I am much con-

firmed by consideration of the silliness and poorness of those suggestions, and partly of the apparent vanity and falsehood of them, which you offer in justification of this wicked calumny. For what, if our devotion towards God out of a desire, that he should be worshipped as in spirit and in truth in the first place, so also in the beauty of holiness? What if out of fear, that too much simplicity and nakedness in the public service of God, may beget in the ordinary sort of men a dull and stupid irreverence; and out of hope, that the outward state and glory of it, being well disposed, and wisely moderated, may engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due unto God's sovereign majesty and power? What if out of a persuasion and desire that papists may be won over to us the sooner, by the removing of this scandal out of their way; and out of an holy jealousy, that the weaker sort of protestants might be the easier seduced to them by the magnificence and pomp of their church-service, in case it were not removed? I say, what if out of these considerations, the governors of our church, more of late than formerly, have set themselves to adorn and beautify the places where God's honour dwells, and to make them as heaven-like as they can with earthly ornaments? Is this a sign, that they are warping towards popery? Is this devotion in the church of England an argument that she is coming over to the church of Rome? Sir Edwin Sands, I presume, every man will grant, had no inclination that way; yet he, forty years since, highly commended this part of devotion in papists, and makes no scruple of proposing it to the imitation of pro-

testants; little thinking, that they who would follow his counsel, and endeavour to take away this disparagement of protestants, and this glorying of papists, should have been censured for it, as making way and inclining to popery. His* words to this purpose are excellent words; and because they shew plainly, that what is now practised was approved by zealous protestants so long ago, I will here set them down.

23. "This one thing I cannot but highly commend in that sort and order: they spare nothing which cost can perform in enriching, or skill in adorning, the temple of God; or to set out his service with the greatest pomp and magnificence that can be devised. And although, for the most part, much baseness and childishness is predominant in the masters and contrivers of their ceremonies, yet this outward state and glory, being well disposed, doth engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due unto sovereign majesty and power. And although I am not ignorant, that many men well reputed have embraced the thrifty opinion of that disciple, who thought all to be wasted that was bestowed upon Christ in that sort, and that it were much better bestowed on the poor (yet with an eye perhaps that themselves would be his quarter-almoners); notwithstanding, I must confess, it will never sink into my heart, that in proportion of reason, the allowance for furnishing out of the service of God should be measured by the scant and strict rule of mere necessity (a proportion so low, that na-

* Survey of Religion, init.

ture to other most bountiful, in matter of necessity hath not failed, no not the most ignoble creatures of the world); and that for ourselves, no measure of heaping, but the most we can get; no rule of expense, but to the utmost pomp we list: or that God himself had so enriched the lower parts of the world with such wonderful varieties of beauty and glory, that they might serve only to the pampering of mortal man in his pride; and that in the service of the high Creator, Lord, and Giver (the outward glory of whose higher palace may appear by the very lamps that we see so far off burning gloriously in it) only the simpler, baser, cheaper, less noble, less beautiful, less glorious things should be employed: especially seeing, as in princes' courts, so in the service of God also, this outward state and glory, being well disposed, doth (as I have said) engender, quicken, increase, and nourish the inward reverence, respect, and devotion, which is due to sovereign majesty and power: which those whom the use thereof cannot persuade into, would easily, by the want of it, be brought to confess. For which cause, I crave leave to be excused by them herein, if in zeal to the common Lord of all, I choose rather to commend the virtue of an enemy, than to flatter the vice and imbecility of a friend." And so much for this matter.

24. Again; what if the names of priests and altars, so frequent in the ancient fathers, though not now in the popish sense, be now resumed and more commonly used in England than of late times they were; that so the colourable argument of their conformity, which is but nominal, with the ancient church, and our inconformity, which

the governors of the church would not have so much as nominal, may be taken away from them; and the church of England may be put in a state, in this regard more justifiable against the Roman than formerly it was, being hereby enabled to say to papists (whensoever these names are objected), we also use the names of priests and altars, and yet believe neither the corporal presence, nor any proper and propitiatory sacrifice?

25. What if protestants be now put in mind, that for exposition of Scripture, they are bound by a canon to follow the ancient fathers; which whosoever doth with sincerity, it is utterly impossible he should be a papist? And it is most falsely said by you, that you know, that to some protestants I clearly demonstrated, or ever so much as undertook, or went about to demonstrate the contrary. What if the centurists be censured somewhat roundly by a protestant divine, for affirming, that the keeping of the Lord's day was a thing indifferent for two hundred years? Is there in all this, or any part of it, any kind of proof of this scandalous calumny? Certainly, if you can make no better arguments than these, and have so little judgment, as to think these any, you have great reason to decline conferences, and Signior Con to prohibit you from writing books any more.

26. As for the points of doctrine, wherein you pretend that these divines begin of late to faulter, and to comply with the church of Rome; upon a due examination of particulars, it will presently appear; first, that part of them always have been, and now are, held constantly one way by them; as the authority of the church in determining controversies of faith, though not the infallibility

of it: that there is inherent justice, though so imperfect, that it cannot justify: that there are traditions, though none necessary: that charity is to be preferred before knowledge: that good works are not properly meritorious: and, lastly, that faith alone justifies; though that faith justifies not which is alone. And, secondly, for the remainder, that they every one of them have been anciently, without breach of charity, disputed among protestants; such, for example, were the questions about the pope's being the antichrist: the lawfulness of some kind of prayers for the dead: the estate of the fathers' souls before Christ's ascension: free-will, predestination, universal grace: the possibility of keeping God's commandments: the use of pictures in the church: wherein that there hath been anciently diversity of opinion amongst protestants, it is justified to my hand by a witness with you, beyond exception, even your great friend, Mr. Breerly, "whose care, exactness, and fidelity (you say in your preface) is so extraordinary great." Consult him, therefore, Tract 3. Sect. 7. of his Apology, and in the 9, 10, 11, 14. 24. 26, 27, 37 subdivisions of that Section, you shall see, as in a mirror, yourself proved an egregious calumniator, for charging protestants with innovation, and inclining to popery, under pretence, forsooth, that their doctrine begins of late to be altered in these points. Whereas Mr. Breerly will inform you, they have been anciently, and even from the beginning of the Reformation, controverted amongst them, though perhaps the stream and current of their doctors run one way, and only some brook or rivulet of them the others.

27. And thus, my friends, I suppose, are clearly

vindicated from your scandals and calumnies. It remains now, in the last place, I bring myself fairly off from your foul aspersions, that so my person may not be (as indeed howsoever it should not be) any disadvantage or disparagement to the cause, nor any scandal to weak Christians.

28. Your injuries then to me (no way deserved by me, but by differing in opinion from you, wherein yet you surely differ from me as much as I from you) are especially three. For, first, upon hearsay, and refusing to give me opportunity of begetting in you a better understanding of me, you charge me with a great number of false and impious doctrines, which I will not name in particular, because I will not assist you so far in the spreading of my own undeserved defamation: but whosoever teaches or holds them, let him be anathema! The sum of them all cast up by yourself, in your first chapter is this: "Nothing ought or can be certainly believed, farther than it may be proved by evidence of natural reason (where I conceive, natural reason is opposed to supernatural revelation); and whosoever holds so, let him be anathema! and moreover, to clear myself once for all from all imputations of this nature, which charge me injuriously with denial of supernatural verities, I profess sincerely, that I believe all those books of Scripture, which the church of England accounts canonical, to be the infallible word of God: I believe all things evidently contained in them; all things evidently, or even probably, deducible from them: I acknowledge all that to be heresy, which by the act of parliament *primo* of Q. Eliz. is declared to be so, and only to be so: and though in such points, which may be held diversely of

divers men *salva fidei compage*, I would not take any man's liberty from him, and humbly beseech all men, that they would not take mine from me: yet thus much I can say (which I hope will satisfy any man of reason) that whatsoever hath been held necessary to salvation, either by the catholic church of all ages, or by the consent of fathers, measured by Vincentius Lyrinensis's rule, or is held necessary, either by the catholic church of this age, or by the consent of protestants, or even by the church of England, that, against the Socinians, and all others whatsoever, I do verily be-

believe, that you did not believe yourself. For how is it possible you should believe that I deserted your religion for ends, and against the light of my conscience, out of a desire of preferment; and yet, out of scruple of conscience, should refuse (which also you impute to me) to subscribe the Thirty-nine Articles; that is, refuse to enter at the only common door, which here in England leads to preferment? Again, how incredible is it, that you should believe that I forsook the profession of your religion, as not suiting with my desires and designs, which yet reconciles the enjoying of the pleasures and profits of sin here, with the hope of happiness hereafter, and proposes as great hope of temporal advancements to the capable servants of it, as any, nay more than any, religion in the world; and, instead of this, should choose Socinianism, a doctrine, which howsoever erroneous in explicating the mysteries of religion, and allowing greater liberty of opinion in speculative matters, than any other company of Christians doth, or they should do; yet certainly, which you, I am sure, will pretend and maintain to explicate the laws of Christ with more rigour, and less indulgence and condescendence to the desires of flesh and blood than your doctrine doth: and, besides, such a doctrine, by which no man, in his right mind, can hope for any honour and preferment, either in this church or state, or any other: all which clearly demonstrates, that this foul and false aspersion, which you have cast upon me, proceeds from no other fountain, but a heart abounding with gall and bitterness of uncharitableness, and blinded with malice towards me; or else from a perverse zeal to your superstition, which secretly suggests

this persuasion to you; that for the catholic cause nothing is unlawful, but that you may make use of such indirect and crooked arts as these to blast my reputation, and to possess men's minds with disaffection to my person: lest otherwise, peradventure, they might with some indifference hear reason from me. God, I hope, which bringeth light out of darkness, will turn your counsels to foolishness, and give all good men grace to perceive, how weak and ruinous that religion must be, which needs supportance from such tricks and devices: so I call them, because they deserve no better name. For what are all these personal matters, which hitherto you spoke of, to the business in hand? If it could be proved, that Cardinal Bellarmine was indeed a Jew, or that Cardinal Perron was an atheist; yet I presume you would not accept of this for an answer to all their writings in defence of your religion. Let then my actions, intentions, and opinions, be what they will, yet I hope truth is nevertheless truth, nor reason ever the less reason, because I speak it. And therefore the Christian reader knowing that his salvation or damnation depends upon his impartial and sincere judgment of these things, will guard himself, I hope, from these impostures, and regard not the person, but the cause and the reasons of it; not who speaks, but what is spoken: which is all the favour I desire of him, as knowing, that I am desirous not to persuade him, unless it be truth whereunto I persuade him.

30. The third and last part of my accusation was, that I answer out of "principles which protestants themselves will profess to detest:" which indeed were to the purpose, if it could be justified.

But besides that it is confuted by my whole book, and made ridiculous by the approbations premised unto it; it is very easy for me out of your own mouth and words to prove it a most injurious calumny. For what one conclusion is there in the whole fabric of my discourse, that is not naturally deducible out of this one principle, that all things necessary to salvation are contained in the Scripture? or what one conclusion almost of importance is there in your book, which is not by this one clearly confutable?

31. Grant this, and it will presently follow, in opposition to your first conclusion, and the argument of your first chapter, that amongst men of different opinions, touching the obscure and controverted questions of religion, such may with probability be disputed on both sides (and such are the disputes of protestants) good men and lovers of truth on all sides may be saved; because all necessary things being supposed evident concerning them, with men so qualified, there will be no difference: there being no more certain sign, that a point is not evident, than that honest and understanding and indifferent men, and such as give themselves liberty of judgment after a mature consideration of the matter, differ about it.

32. Grant this, and it will appear, secondly, that the means whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding, and which are to determine all controversies in faith necessary to be determined, may be, for any thing you have said to the contrary, not a church, but the Scripture; which contradicts the doctrine of your second chapter.

33. Grant this, and the distinction of points,

ndamental and not fundamental, will appear ery good and pertinent. For those truths will be undamental, which are evidently delivered in Scripture, and commanded to be preached to all men; those not fundamental, which are obscure. And nothing will hinder but that the catholic church may err in the latter kind of the said points; because truths not necessary to the salvation, cannot be necessary to the being of a church; and because it is not absolutely necessary that God should assist his church any farther than to bring her to salvation; neither will there be any necessity at all of any infallible guide, either to consign unwritten traditions, or to declare the obscurities of the faith: not for the former end, because this principle being granted true, nothing unwritten can be necessary to be consigned: nor for the latter, because nothing that is obscure can be necessary to be understood, or not mistaken. And so the discourse of your whole third chapter will presently vanish.

34. Fourthly, For the creeds containing the fundamentals of simple belief, though I see not how it may be deduced from this principle; yet the granting of this plainly renders the whole dispute touching the creed unnecessary. For if all necessary things, of all sorts, whether of simple belief or practice, be confessed to be clearly contained in Scripture; what imports it, whether those of one sort be contained in the creed?

35. Fifthly, Let this be granted, and the immediate corollary, in opposition to your fifth chapter, will be and must be, that not protestants for re- the church of Rome, for imposing

and unnecessary, and for disturbing the church's peace, and dividing unity for such matters, is in a high degree presumptuous and schismatical.

36. Grant this, sixthly, and it will follow unavoidably, that protestants cannot possibly be heretics, seeing they believe all things evidently contained in Scripture, which are supposed to be all that is necessary to be believed: and so your sixth chapter is clearly confuted.

37. Grant this, lastly, and it will be undoubtedly consequent, in contradiction of your seventh chapter, that no man can shew more charity to himself than by continuing a protestant; seeing protestants are supposed to believe, and therefore may accordingly practise, at least by their religion are not hindered from practising and performing all things necessary to salvation.

38. So that the position of this one principle is the direct overthrow of your whole book; and therefore I needed not, nor indeed have I made use of any other. Now this principle, which is not only the corner-stone, or chief pillar, but even the basis, and the adequate foundation of my answer; and which, while it stands firm and unmoveable, cannot but be the supporter of my book, and the certain ruin of your's, is so far from being, according to your pretence, detested by all protestants, that all protestants whatsoever, as you may see in their harmony of confessions, unanimously profess and maintain it. And you yourself, (chap. vi. § 30.) plainly confess as much, in saying, "The whole edifice of the faith of protestants is settled on these two principles: these particular books are canonical Scripture; and the sense

and meaning of them is plain and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation."

39. And thus your venom against me is in a manner spent, saving only, that there remains two little impertinences, whereby you would disable me from being a fit advocate for the cause of protestants. The first, because I refuse to subscribe the Articles of the church of England; the second, because I have set down in writing, Motives which sometime induced me to forsake protestantism, and hitherto have not answered them.

40. By the former of which objections, it should seem, that either you conceive the Thirty-nine Articles the common doctrine of all protestants; and, if they be, why have you so often upbraided them with their many and great differences? or else, that it is the peculiar defence of the church of England, and not the common cause of all protestants, which is here undertaken by me; which are certainly very gross mistakes. And yet why he who makes scruple of subscribing the truth of one or two propositions, may yet be fit enough to maintain, that those who do subscribe them are in a saveable condition, I do not understand. Now though I hold not the doctrine of all protestants absolutely true (which with reason cannot be required of me, while they hold contradictions), yet I hold it free from all impiety, and from all error destructive of salvation, or in itself damnable: and this I think in reason may sufficiently qualify me, for a maintainer of this assertion, that protestancy destroys not salvation. For the church of England, I am persuaded, that the constant doctrine of it is so pure and orthodox, that who-

soever believes it, and lives according to it, undoubtedly he shall be saved; and that there is no error in it, which may necessitate or warrant any man to disturb the peace, or renounce the communion, of it. This in my opinion is all intended by subscription; and thus much, if you conceive me not ready to subscribe, your charity I assure you is much mistaken.

41. Your other objection against me is yet more impertinent and frivolous than the former; unless perhaps it be a just exception against a physician, that himself was sometimes in, and recovered himself from, that disease which he undertakes to cure; or against a guide in a way, that at first, before he had experience himself, mistook it, and afterwards found his error and amended it. That noble writer, Michael de Montaigne, was surely of a far different mind; for he will hardly allow any physician competent, but only for such diseases as himself had passed through: and a far greater than Montaigne, even he that said, *Tu conversus confirma fratres*, gives us sufficiently to understand, that they which have themselves been in such a state as to need conversion, are not thereby made incapable of, but rather engaged and obliged unto, and qualified for, this charitable function.

42. Neither am I guilty of that strange and preposterous zeal (as you esteem it) which you impute to me; for having been so long careless, in removing this scandal against protestants, and answering my own Motives, and yet now shewing such fervour in writing against others. For neither are they other motives, but the very same, for the most part, with those that abused me,

against which, this book which I now publish, is in a manner wholly employed: and, besides, though you Jesuits take upon you to have such large and universal intelligence of all state-affairs and matters of importance; yet I hope such a contemptible matter, as an answer of mine to a little piece of paper, may very probably have been written and escaped your observation. The truth is, I made an answer to them three years since and better, which perhaps might have been published, but for two reasons: one, because the Motives were never public until you made them so; the other, because I was loth to proclaim to all the world, so much weakness as I shewed, in suffering myself to be abused by such silly sophisms: all which proceeds upon mistakes and false suppositions, which unadvisedly I took for granted; as when I have set down the motives in order by subsequent answers to them, I shall quickly demonstrate, and so make an end.

43. The motives then were these.

1. "Because perpetual visible profession, which could never be wanting to the religion of Christ, or any part of it, is apparently wanting to protestant religion, so far as concerns the points in

and so from the true, if there were any true, were damnable schismatics.

3. "Because, if any credit may be given to as creditable records as any are extant, the doctrine of catholics hath been frequently confirmed; and the opposite doctrine of protestants confounded with supernatural and Divine miracles.

4. "Because many points of protestant doctrine, are the damned opinions of heretics, condemned by the primitive church.

5. "Because the prophecies of the Old Testament, touching the conversion of kings and nations to the true religion of Christ, have been accomplished in and by the catholic Roman religion, and the professors of it; and not by protestant religion, and the professors of it.

6. "Because the doctrine of the church of Rome is conformable, and the doctrine of protestants contrary, to the doctrine of the fathers of the primitive church, even by the confession of protestants themselves; I mean, those fathers who lived within the compass of the first six hundred years; to whom protestants themselves do very frequently, and very confidently, appeal.

7. "Because the first pretended reformers had neither extraordinary commission from God, nor ordinary mission from the church, to preach protestant doctrine.

8. "Because Luther, to preach against the mass (which contains the most material points now in controversy) was persuaded by reasons suggested to him by the devil himself, disputing with him. So himself professeth, in his book de Missa privata; That all men might take heed of following him who professeth himself to follow the devil.

9. "Because the protestant cause is now, and hath been from the beginning, maintained with gross falsifications and calumnies; whereof their prime controversy writers are notoriously and in high degree guilty.

10. "Because by denying all human authority, either of pope or council, or church, to determine controversies of faith, they have abolished all possible means of suppressing heresy, or restoring the unity to the church."

These are the motives. Now my answers to them follow briefly and in order.

44. **To the first. God hath neither decreed nor foretold, that his true doctrine should *de facto* be always visibly professed, without any mixture of falsehood.**

To the second. God hath neither decreed nor foretold, that there shall be always a visible company of men free from all error in itself damnable. Neither is it always of necessity schismatical to separate from the external communion of a church though wanting nothing necessary: for if this church, supposed to want nothing necessary, require me to profess against my conscience, that I believe some error, though never so small and innocent, which I do not believe, and will not allow me her communion but upon this condition; in this case the church for requiring this condition is schismatical, and not I for separating from the church.

To the third. If any credit may be given to records, far more creditable than these, the doctrine of protestants, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, and the doctrine of papists, which is in many points plainly opposite to it, confounded,

with supernatural and Divine miracles, which, for number and glory outshine popish pretended miracles, as much as the sun doth an *ignis fatuus;* those, I mean, which were brought by our Saviour Christ and his apostles. Now this book, by the confession of all sides, confirmed by innumerable miracles, foretels me plainly, that in after ages great signs and wonders shall be wrought in confirmation of false doctrine; and that I am not to believe any doctrine which seems to my understanding repugnant to the first, though an angel from heaven should teach it; which was certainly as great a miracle as any that was ever wrought in attestation of any part of the doctrine of the church of Rome. But, that true doctrine should in all ages have the testimony of miracles, that I am no where taught; so that I have more reason to suspect, and be afraid of, pretended miracles, as signs of false doctrine, than much to regard them as certain arguments of the truth. Besides, setting aside the Bible, and the tradition of it, there is as good story for miracles wrought by those who lived and died in opposition to the doctrine of the Roman church (as by S. Cyprian, Colmannus, Columbanus, Aidanus, and others) as there is for those that are pretended to be wrought by the members of that church. Lastly, it seems to me no strange thing, that God in his justice should permit some true miracles to be wrought to delude them, who have forged so many, as apparently the professors of the Roman church have, to abuse the world.

To the fourth. All those were not heretics,*

ch, by Philastrius, Epiphanius, or St. Austin,
re put into the catalogue of heretics.
To the fifth. Kings and nations have been and
ay be converted by men of contrary religions.
To the sixth. The doctrine of papists is con-
ssed by papists, contrary to the fathers in many
oints.

To the seventh. The pastors of a church cannot
but have authority from it, to preach against the
abuses of it, whether in doctrine or practice, if
there be any in it: neither can any Christian want
an ordinary commission from God to do a neces-
sary work of charity after a peaceable manner,
when there is nobody else that can or will do it.
In extraordinary cases, extraordinary courses are
not to be disallowed. If some Christian layman
should come into a country of infidels, and had
ability to persuade them to Christianity, who
would say, he might not use it for want of com-
mission?

To the eighth. Luther's conference with the
devil might be, for aught I know, nothing but a
melancholy dream. If it were real, the devil might
persuade Luther from the mass, hoping, by doing
so, to keep him to it: or that others would make
his dissuasion from it an argument from it (as we
see papists do) and be afraid of following Luther
as confessing himself to have been persuaded by
the devil.

To the ninth. *Iliacos intra muros peccatur et ext*
Papists are more guilty of this fault than prote
Even this very author in this very pam

let hath not so many leaves as falsifications and calumnies.

To the tenth. Let all men believe the Scripture, and that only, and endeavour to believe it in the true sense, and require no more of others, and they shall find this not only a better, but the only means to suppress heresy, and restore unity. For he that believes the Scripture sincerely, and endeavours to believe it in the true sense, cannot possibly be an heretic. And if no more than this were required of any man to make him capable of the church's communion, then all men so qualified, though they were different in opinion, yet, notwithstanding any such difference, must be of necessity one in communion.

THE AUTHOR OF

CHARITY MAINTAINED,

HIS PREFACE TO THE READER.

"GIVE me leave (good reader) to inform thee, by way of preface, of three points: the first concerns D. Potter's Answer to Charity Mistaken. The second relates to this Reply of mine. And the third contains some premonitions, or prescriptions, in case D. Potter, or any in his behalf, think

never so small in their own nature; and, therefore, that the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental, is wholly vain, as it is applied by protestants. These (I say) and some other general grounds, Charity Mistaken handles; and out of them doth clearly evince, that any the least difference in faith cannot stand with salvation on both sides. And, therefore, since it is apparent, that catholics and protestants disagree in very many points of faith, they both cannot hope to be saved without repentance; and, consequently, as we hold that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, so must they also believe, that we cannot be saved, if they judge their own religion to be true, and our's to be false. And whosoever disguiseth this truth, is an enemy to souls, which he deceives with ungrounded false hope of salvation in different faiths and religions. And this Charity Mistaken performed exactly, according to that which appears to have been his design, which was not to descend to particular disputes, as D. Potter affectedly does; namely, whether or no the Roman church be the only church of Christ; and, much less, whether general councils be infallible: whether the pope may err in his decrees common to the whole church: whether he be above a general council: whether all points of faith be contained in Scripture: whether faith be resolved into the authority of the church, as into its last formal object and motive: and least of all did he discourse of images, communion under both kinds, public service in an unknown tongue, seven sacraments, sacrifice of the mass, indulgences, and *index expurgatorius*. All which, and divers other articles, D. Potter (as I said) draws by violence into his book: and he

might as well have brought in Pope Joan, or antichrist, or the Jews who are permitted to live in Rome; which are common themes for men that want better matter, as D. Potter was forced to fetch in the aforesaid controversies, that so he might dazzle the eyes, and distract the mind, of the reader, and hinder him from perceiving, that in his whole Answer he uttereth nothing to the purpose and point in question; which if he had followed closely, I dare well say, he might have dispatched his whole book in two or three sheets of paper. But the truth is, he was loth to affirm plainly, that generally both catholics and protestants may be saved. And yet seeing it to be most evident, that protestants cannot pretend to have any true church before Luther, except the Roman, and such as agreed with her; and, consequently, that they cannot hope for salvation, if they deny it to us; he thought best to avoid this difficulty by confusion of language, and to fill up his book with points, which make nothing to the purpose: wherein he is less excusable, because he must grant, that those very particulars, to which he digresseth, are not fundamental errors, though it should be granted that they be errors, which indeed are catholic verities: for since they be not fundamental, nor destructive of salvation, what imports it, whether we hold them or no, forasmuch as concerns our possibility to be saved?

3. "In one thing only he will perhaps seem to have touched the point in question; to wit, in his distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental; because some may think, that a difference [illegible] are not fundamental breaks not the

tion in persons so disagreeing. And yet, in this very distinction, he never speaks to the purpose indeed, but only says, that there are some points so fundamental, as that all are obliged to know and believe them explicitly; but never tells us, whether there be any other points of faith, which a man may deny or disbelieve, though they be sufficiently presented to his understanding as truths revealed or testified by Almighty God; which was the only thing in question. For if it be damnable, as certainly it is, to deny or disbelieve any one truth witnessed by Almighty God, though the thing be not in itself of any great consequence or moment; and since, of two disagreeing in matters of faith, one must necessarily deny some such truth; it clearly follows, that amongst men of different faiths, or religions, one only can be saved, though their difference consist of divers, or but even one point, which is not in its own nature fundamental, as I declare at large in divers places of my first part. So that it is clear, D. Potter, even in this his last refuge and distinction, never comes to the point in question: to say nothing, that he himself doth quite overthrow it, and plainly contradict his whole design, as I shew in the third chapter of my first part.

4. " And as for D. Potter's manner of handling those very points, which are utterly beside the purpose, consists only in bringing vulgar mean objections, which have been answered a thousand times; yea, and some of them are clearly answered even in Charity Mistaken; but he takes no knowledge at all of any such answers, and much less does he apply himself to confute them. He allegeth also authors with so great corruption

and fraud, as I would not have believed, if I had not found it by clear and frequent experience. In his second edition, he has indeed left out one or two gross corruptions, amongst many others no less notorious; having, as it seems, been warned by some friends, that they could not stand with his credit: but even in this his second edition he retracts them not at all, nor declares, that he was mistaken in the first; and so his reader of the first edition shall ever be deceived by him, though withal he read the second. For preventing of which inconvenience, I have thought it necessary to take notice of them, and discover them in my Reply.

5. " And for conclusion of this point I will only say, that D. Potter might have well spared his pains, if he had ingenuously acknowledged where the whole substance, yea, and sometimes the very words and phrases of his book, may be found in a far briefer manner, namely, in a Sermon of D. Usher's, preached before our late Sovereign Lord King James, the 20th of June, 1624, at Wansted; containing A Declaration of the Universality of the Church of Christ, and the Unity of Faith professed therein: which Sermon having been roundly and wittily confuted by a catholic divine, under the name of Paulus Veridicus, within the compass of about four sheets of paper, D. Potter's Answer to Charity Mistaken was in effect confuted before it appeared. And this may suffice for a general censure of his Answer to Charity Mistaken.

6. " For the second, touching my Reply: if you wonder at the bulk thereof, compared either with Charity Mistaken, or D. Potter's Answer; I desire you to consider well of what now I am about to

say, and then I hope you will see, that I was cast upon a mere necessity of not being so short as otherwise might peradventure be desired. Charity Mistaken is short, I grant, and yet very full and large, forasmuch as concerned his design, which you see was not to treat of particular controversies in religion, no not so much as to debate whether or no the Roman church be the only true church of Christ, which indeed would have required a large volume, as I have understood there was one then coming forth, if it had not been prevented by the treatise of Charity Mistaken, which seemed to make the other intended work a little less seasonable at that time. But Charity Mistaken proves only in general out of some universal principles, well backed and made good by choice and solid authorities, that of two disagreeing in points of faith, one only without repentance can be saved; which aim exacted no great bulk. And as for D. Potter's Answer, even that also is not so short as it may seem. For if his marginal notes, printed in a small letter, were transferred into the text, the book would appear to be of some bulk: though indeed it might have been very short, if he had kept himself to the point treated by Charity Mistaken, as shall be declared anon. But, contrarily, because the question debated betwixt Charity Mistaken and D. Potter, is a point of the highest consequence that can be imagined; and, in regard that there is not a more penicious heresy, or rather indeed ground of atheism, than a persuasion, that men of different religions may be saved, if otherwise, forsooth, they lead a kind of civil and moral life: I conceive, that my chief endeavour was not to be employed

answering D. Potter; but that it was necessary to handle the question itself somewhat at large, and not only to prove in general, that both protestants and catholics cannot be saved; but to shew also, that salvation cannot be hoped for out of the catholic Roman church; and yet withal, not to omit to answer all the particulars of D. Potter's book, which may any ways import. To this end I thought it fit to divide my Reply into two parts: in the former whereof, the main question is handled by a continued discourse, without stepping aside to confute the particulars of D. Potter's Answer; though yet so, as that even in this first part I omit not to answer such passages of his, as I find directly in my way, and naturally belong to the points whereof I treat: and, in the second part, I answer D. Potter's treatise, section by section, as they lie in order. I here therefore intreat the reader, that if he heartily desire satisfaction in this so important question, he do not content himself with that which I say to D. Potter in my second part, but that he take the first before him, either all, or at least so much as may serve most to his purpose of being satisfied in those doubts which press him most. For which purpose, I have caused a table of the chapters of the first part, together with their titles and arguments, to be prefixed to my Reply.

7. "This was then a chief reason why I could not be very short: but yet there wanted not also divers other causes of the same effect. For there are so several kinds of protestants, through the difference of tenets which they hold, as that if a man convince but one kind of them, the rest will conceive themselves to be as truly unsatisfied,

and even unspoken to, as if nothing had been said therein at all. As for example: some hold a necessity of a perpetual visible church, and some hold no such necessity. Some of them hold it necessary to be able to prove it distinct from our's; and others, that their business is dispatched, when they have proved our's to have been always visible; for then they will conceive, that their's hath been so: and the like may be truly said of very many other particulars. Besides, it is D. Potter's fashion (wherein as he is very far from being the first, so I pray God he prove the last of that humour) to touch in a word many trivial old objections, which, if they be not all answered, it will and must serve the turn, to make the ignorant sort of men believe and brag, as if some main unanswerable matter had been subtilly and purposely omitted: and every body knows, that some objection may be very plausibly made in few words, the clear and solid answer whereof will require more leaves of paper than one. And, in particular, D. Potter doth couch his corruption of authors within the compass of a few lines, and with so great confusedness and fraud, that it requires much time, pains, and paper, to open them so distinctly, as that they may appear to every man's eye. It was also necessary to shew what D. Potter omits in Charity Mistaken, and the importance of what is omitted; and sometimes to set down the very words themselves that are omitted: all which could not but add to the quantity of my Reply. And as for the quality thereof, I desire thee, good reader, to believe, that whereas nothing is more necessary than books for answering of books; yet I was so ill

furnished in this kind, that I was forced to omit the examination of divers authors cited by D. Potter, merely upon necessity; though I did very well perceive, by most apparent circumstances, that I must probably have been sure enough to find them plainly misalleged, and much wronged: and, for the few which are examined, there hath not wanted some difficulty to do it. For the times are not for all men alike; and D. Potter hath much advantage therein. But truth is truth, and will ever be able to justify itself in the midst of all difficulties which may occur. As for me, when I allege protestant writers, as well domestical as foreign, I willingly and thankfully acknowledge myself obliged for divers of them, to the author of the book entitled, The Protestants Apology for the Roman Church, who calls himself John Brerely; whose care, exactness, and fidelity, is so extraordinary great, as that he doth not only cite the books, but the editions also, with the place and time of their printing, yea, and often the very page and line, where the words are to be had. And if you happen not to find what he cites, yet suspend your judgment till you have read the corrections placed at the end of this book, though it be also true that, after all diligence and faithfulness on his behalf, it was not in his power to amend all the faults of the prints: in which prints we have difficulty enough for many evident reasons, which must needs occur

ral, or D. Potter's person in particular; unless, for example, he will call it bitterness for me to term a gross impertinency a sleight, or a corruption, by those very names, without which I do not know how to express the things: and yet therein I can truly affirm, that I have studied how to deliver them in the most moderate way, to the end I might give as little offence as possible I could, without betraying the cause. And if any unfit phrase may peradventure have escaped my pen (as I hope none hath) it was beside and against my intention; though I must needs profess, that D. Potter gives so many and so just occasions of being round with him, as that perhaps some will judge me to have been rather remiss than moderate. But since in the very title of my Reply, I profess to maintain charity, I conceive the excess will be more excusable amongst all kinds of men, if it fall to be in mildness, than if it had appeared in too much zeal. And if D. Potter have a mind to charge me with ignorance, or any thing of that nature, I can and will ease him of that labour, by acknowledging in myself as many and more personal defects than he can heap upon me. Truth only, and sincerity, I so much value and profess, as that he shall never be able to prove the contrary in any one least passage or particle against me.

9. "In the third and last place, I have thought fit to express myself thus:—If D. Potter or any other resolve to answer my Reply, I desire that he would observe some things which may tend to his own reputation, the saving of my unnecessary pains, and especially to the greater advantage of truth. I wish then that he would be careful to

consider, wherein the point of every difficulty consists, and not impertinently to shoot at rovers, and affectedly mistake one thing for another. As for example, to what purpose (forasmuch as concerns the question between D. Potter and Charity Mistaken) doth he so often and seriously labour to prove, that faith is not resolved into the authority of the church, as into the formal object and motive thereof? Or, that all points of faith are contained in Scripture? Or, that the church cannot make new articles of faith? Or, that the church of Rome, as it signifies that particular church or diocese, is not all one with the universal church? Or, that the pope as a private doctor may err? With many other such points as will easily appear in their proper places. It will also be necessary for him not to put certain doctrines upon us, from which he knows we disclaim as much as himself.

10. "I must, in like manner, intreat him not to recite my reasons and discourses by halves, but to set them down faithfully and entirely, forasmuch as in very deed concerns the whole substance of the thing in question; because the want sometimes of one word may chance to make void, or lessen the force of the whole argument. And I am the more solicitous about giving this particular caveat, because I find how ill he hath complied with the promise which he made in his Preface to the Reader, not to omit without answer any one thing of moment in all the discourse of Charity Mistaken. Neither will this course be a cause that his rejoinder grow too large, but it will be occasion of brevity to him, and free me also from the pains of setting down all the words which he omits, and

himself of demonstrating, that what he omitted was not material. Nay, I will assure him, that if he keep himself to the point of every difficulty, and not weary the reader, and overcharge his margent with unnecessary quotations of authors in Greek and Latin, and sometimes also in Italian and French, together with proverbs, sentences of poets, and such grammatical stuff; nor affect to cite a multitude of our catholic school divines to no purpose at all: his book will not exceed a competent size, nor will any man in reason be offended with that length which is regulated by necessity. Again, before he come to set down his answer, or propose his arguments, let him consider very well what may be replied, and whether his own objections may not be retorted against himself, as the reader will perceive to have happened often to his disadvantage in my Reply against him. But especially I expect, and truth itself exacts at his hand, that he speak clearly and distinctly, and not seek to walk in darkness, so to delude and deceive his reader, now saying, and then denying, and always speaking with such ambiguity, as that his greatest care may seem to consist in a certain art to find a shift, as his occasions might chance either now or hereafter to require, and as he might fall out to be urged by diversity of several arguments. And to the end it may appear that I deal plainly, as I would have him also do, I desire that he declare himself concerning these points.

11. "First. Whether our Saviour Christ have not always had, and be not ever to have, a visible true church on earth? And whether the contrary doctrine be not a damnable heresy?

12. "Secondly. What visible church there was

before Luther, disagreeing from the Roman church, and agreeing with the pretended church of protestants.

13. "Thirdly. Since he will be forced to grant, that there can be assigned no visible true church of Christ, distinct from the church of Rome, and such churches as agreed with her when Luther first appeared; whether it doth not follow, that she hath not erred fundamentally? Because every such error destroys the nature and being of the church, and so our Saviour Christ should have had no visible church on earth.

14. "Fourthly. If the Roman church did not fall into any fundamental error, let him tell us how it can be damnable to live in her communion, or to maintain errors which are known and confessed not to be fundamental or damnable.

15. "Fifthly. If her errors were not damnable, nor did exclude salvation, how can they be excused from schism, who forsook her communion upon pretence of errors which were not damnable?

16. "Sixthly. If D. Potter have a mind to say, that her errors are damnable, or fundamental, let him do us so much charity, as to tell us in particular, what those fundamental errors be. But he must still remember (and myself must be excused for repeating it) that if he say, the Roman church erred fundamentally, he will not be able to shew, that Christ our Lord had any visible church on earth when Luther appeared: and let him tell us, how protestants had, or can have, any church which was universal, and extended herself to all ages, if once he grant that the Roman church ceased to be the true church of Christ; and, con-

sequently, how they can hope for salvation if they deny it to us.

17. "Seventhly. Whether any one error maintained against any one truth, though never so small in itself, yet sufficiently propounded as testified or revealed by Almighty God, do not destroy the nature and unity of faith, or at least is not a grievous offence excluding salvation?

18. "Eighthly. If this be so, how can Lutherans, Calvinists, Zuinglians, and all the rest of disagreeing protestants, hope for salvation, since it is manifest, that some of them must needs err, against some such truth as is testified by Almighty God, either fundamental, or at least not fundamental?

19. "Ninthly. We constantly urge, and require to have a particular catalogue of such points, as he calls fundamental: a catalogue, I say, in particular, and not only some general definition, or description, wherein protestants may perhaps agree, though we see that they differ, when they come to assign what points in particular be fundamental; and yet upon such a particular catalogue much depends: as for example, in particular, whether or no a man doth not err in some points fundamental or necessary to salvation? and whether or no Lutherans, Calvinists, and the rest, do disagree in fundamentals? which, if they do, the same heaven cannot receive them all.

20. "Tenthly, and lastly. I desire that in answering to these points, he would let us know distinctly, what is the doctrine of the protestant English church concerning them, and what he utters only as his own private opinion.

21. "These are the questions, which, for the

present, I find it fit and necessary for me to ask of D. Potter, or any other who will defend his cause, or impugn our's. And it will be in vain to speak vainly, and to tell me, that a fool may ask more questions in an hour, than a wise man can answer in a year; with such idle proverbs as that: for I ask but such questions as for which he gives occasion in his book, and where he declares not himself, but after so ambiguous and confused a manner, as that truth itself can scarce tell how to convince him so, but that with ignorant and ill-judging men, he will seem to have somewhat left to say for himself, though papists (as he calls them) and puritans should press him contrary ways at the same time: and these questions concern things also of high importance, as whereupon the knowledge of God's church, and true religion, and consequently salvation of the soul depends. And now, because he shall not tax me with being like those men in the gospel, whom our blessed Lord and Saviour charged with laying heavy burdens upon other mens' shoulders, who yet would not touch them with their finger; I oblige myself to answer, upon any demand of his, both to all these questions, if he find that I have not done it already, and to any other, concerning matter of faith, that he shall ask. And I will tell him very plainly, what is catholic doctrine, and what is not, that is, what is defined, or what is not defined, and rests but in discussion amongst divines.

stances of ignorance, incapacity, want of means to be instructed, erroneous conscience, and the like; which being very various and different, cannot be well comprehended under any general rule. But in delivering general doctrines, we must consider things as they be *ex natura rei*, or *per se loquendo*, (as divines speak) that is, according to their natures, if all circumstances concur proportionable thereunto. As for example, some may for a time have invincible ignorance even of some fundamental article of faith, through want of capacity, instruction, or the like; and so not offend either in such ignorance or error; and yet we must absolutely say, that error in any one fundamental point is damnable; because so it is, if we consider things in themselves, abstracting from accidental circumstances in particular persons: as contrarily if some man judge some act of virtue, or some indifferent action to be a sin, in him it is a sin indeed, by reason of his erroneous conscience; and yet we ought not to say absolutely, that virtuous or indifferent actions are sins; and in all sciences we must distinguish the general rules from their particular exceptions. And therefore when, for example, he answers to our demand, whether we hold that catholics may be saved, or whether their pretended errors be fundamental and damnable? he is not to change the state of the question, and have recourse to ignorance, and the like; but to answer concerning the errors being considered what they are apt to be in themselves, and as they are neither increased or diminished by accidental circumstances.

23. "And the like I say of all the other points, to which I once again desire an answer without any of these or the like ambiguous terms, in some

sort, in some sense, in some degree, which may be explicated afterward, as strictly or largely as may best serve his turn; but let him tell us roundly and particularly in what sort, in what sense, in what degree he understands those, and the like obscure mincing phrases. If he proceed solidly after this manner, and not by way of mere words, more like a preacher to a vulgar auditory, than like a learned man with a pen in his hand; thy patience shall be less abused, and truth will also receive more right. And since we have already laid the grounds of the question, much may be said hereafter in few words, if (as I said) he keep close to the real point of every difficulty, without wandering into impertinent disputes, or multiplying vulgar and thread-bare objections and arguments, or labouring to prove what no man denies, or making a vain ostentation by citing a number of schoolmen, which every puny brought up in schools is able to do; and if he cite his authors with such sincerity, as no time need be spent in opening his corruptions; and, finally, if he set himself at work with this consideration, that we are to give a more strict account to a most just and impartial Judge, of every period, line, and word that passeth under our pen. For if at the latter day we shall be arraigned for every idle word which is spoken, so much more will that be done for every idle word which is written, as the deliberation wherewith it passeth makes a man guilty of more malice; and as the importance of the matter which is treated of in books concerning true faith and religion, without which no soul can be saved, makes a man's errors more material than they would be if the question were but of

THE

ANSWER TO THE PREFACE.

AD. 1 and 2. §. If beginnings be ominous (as they say they are) D. Potter hath cause to look for great store of uningenuous dealing from you; the very first words you speak of him, viz. that he hath not so much as once truly and really fallen upon the point in question, being a most unjust and immodest imputation.

2. For, first. The point in question, was not that which you pretend, Whether both papists and protestants can be saved in their several professions? But, Whether you may without uncharitableness affirm, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation? And that this is the very question, is most apparent and unquestionable, both from the title of Charity Mistaken, and from the arguments of the three first chapters of it, and from the title of your own reply. And therefore if D. Potter had joined issue with his adversary only thus far; and, not meddling at all with papists, but leaving them to stand or to fall to their own Master, had proved protestants living and dying so capable of salvation, I cannot see how it could justly be charged upon him, that he had not once truly and really fallen upon the point

in question. Neither may it be said, that your question here and mine, are in effect the same, seeing it is very possible, that the true answer to the one might have been affirmative, and to the other negative. For there is no incongruity, but it may be true, that you and we cannot both be saved? And yet as true, that without uncharitableness you cannot pronounce us damned. For, all ungrounded and unwarrantable sentencing men to damnation, is either in a propriety of speech uncharitable, or else (which for my purpose is all one) it is that which protestants mean, when they say, papists for damning them are uncharitable. And, therefore, though the author of C. M. had proved as strongly as he hath done weakly, that one heaven could not receive protestants and papists both; yet certainly, it was very hastily and unwarrantably, and therefore uncharitably concluded, that protestants were the part that was to be excluded. As though Jews and Christians cannot both be saved; yet a Jew cannot, justly, and therefore not charitably, pronounce a Christian damned.

3. But, then, secondly, to shew your dealing with him very injurious; I say, he doth speak to this very question very largely, and very effectually; as by confronting his work and Charity M. together, will presently appear. Charity M. proves, you say in general, that "there is but [illegible]" D. Potter tells him, his labour

hearken to the church." D. Potter answers, "It is true: yet not absolutely in all things, but only when she commands those things which God doth not countermand." And this, also, I hope, is to his purpose, though not to your's. C. M. proves, you say, thirdly, that "the church must be ever visible and infallible." For her visibility, D. Potter denies it not; and, as for infallibility, he grants it in fundamentals, but not in superstructures. C. M. proves, you say, fourthly, that "to separate one's self from the church's communion, is schism." D. Potter grants it, with this exception, unless there be necessary cause to do so; unless the conditions of her communion be apparently unlawful. C. M. proves, you say, lastly, that "to dissent from her doctrine is heresy, though it be in points never so few, and never so small; and therefore, that the distinction of points fundamental and unfundamental, as it is applied by protestants, is wholly vain." This D. Potter denies; shews the reasons brought for it weak and unconcluding; proves the contrary, by reasons unanswerable: and therefore, that the distinction of points into fundamental and not fundamental, as it is applied by protestants, is very good. Upon these grounds, you say, C. M. clearly evinces, that "any least difference in faith cannot stand with salvation; and therefore seeing catholics and protestants disagree in very many points of faith, they both cannot hope to be saved without repentance;" you must mean, without an explicit and particular repentance, and dereliction of their errors; for so C. M. hath declared himself, (p. 14.) where he hath these words: "We may safely say, that a man who

lives in protestancy, and is so far from repenting it, as that he will not so much as acknowledge it to be a sin, though he be sufficiently informed thereof," &c. From whence it is evident, that in his judgment there can be no repentance of an error, without acknowledging it to be a sin. And to this D. Potter justly opposes; that " both sides, by the confession of both sides, agree in more points than are simply and indispensably necessary to salvation, and differ only in such as are not precisely necessary: that it is very possible a man may die in error, and yet die with repentance, as for all his sins of ignorance, so, in that number, for the errors in which he dies; with a repentance though not explicit and particular, which is not simply required, yet implicit and general, which is sufficient: so that he cannot but hope, considering the goodness of God, that the truths retained on both sides, especially those, of the necessity of repentance from dead works and faith in Jesus Christ, if they be put in practice, may be an antidote against the errors held on either side; to such he means, and says, as being diligent in seeking truth, and desirous to find it, yet miss of it through human frailty, and die in error." If you will but attentively consider and compare the undertaking of C. M. and D. Potter's performance in all these points, I hope you will be so ingenuous as to acknowledge, that you have injured him much, in imputing tergiversation to him, and pretending, that through his whole book he hath not once truly and really fallen upon the point in question. Neither may you or C. M. conclude him from hence (as covertly you do) an enemy to souls, by deceiving

them with ungrounded false hopes of salvation; seeing the hope of salvation cannot be ungrounded, which requires and supposes belief and practice of all things absolutely necessary unto salvation, and repentance of those sins and errors which we fall into by human frailty: nor a friend to indifferency in religion, seeing he gives them only hope of pardon of errors who are desirous, and, according to the proportion of their opportunities and abilities, industrious to find the truth; or at least truly repentant, that they have not been so. Which doctrine is very fit to excite men to a constant and impartial search of truth, and very far from teaching them, that it is indifferent what religion they are of; and, without all controversy, very honourable to the goodness of God, with which how it can consist, not to be satisfied with his servants' true endeavours to know his will, and do it, without full and exact performance, I leave it to you and all good men to judge.

4. As little justice methinks you shew, in quarrelling with him for descending to the particular disputes here mentioned by you. For to say nothing, that many of these questions are immediately and directly pertinent to the business in hand, as the 1, 2, 3. 5, 6, and all of them fall in of themselves into the stream of his discourse, and are not drawn in by him, and besides, are touched for the most part, rather than handled; to say nothing of all this, you know right well, if he conclude you erroneous in any one of all these, be it but in the communion in one kind, or the language of your service, the infallibility of your church is evidently overthrown: and this being done, I hope there will be "no such neces-

sity of hearkening to her in all things: it will be very possible to separate from her communion in some things, without schism; and from her doctrine, so far as it is erroneous, without heresy: then all that she proposes will not be, *eo ipso*, fundamental, because she proposes it;" and so presently all Charity Mistaken will vanish into smoke, and clouds, and nothing.

5. You say he was loth to affirm plainly, that generally both catholics and protestants may be saved: which yet is manifest he doth affirm plainly of protestants throughout his book; and of erring papists, that "have sincerely sought the truth, and failed of it, and die with a general repentance" (p. 77, 78). And yet you deceive yourself, if you conceive he had any other necessity to do so, but only that he thought it true. For we may and do pretend, that before Luther there were many true churches beside the Roman, which agreed not with her: in particular, the Greek church. So that what you say is evidently true, is indeed evidently false. Besides, if he had any necessity to make use of you in this matter, he needed not for this end to say, that now in your church salvation may be had, but only that before Luther's time it might be: then when your means of knowing the truth were not so great, and when your ignorance might be more invincible, and therefore more excusable. So that you may see, if you please, it is not for ends, but for the love of truth, that we are thus charitable to you.

6. Neither is it material, that these particulars he speaks against are not fundamental errors; for though they be not destructive of salvation, yet the conviction of them may be, and is, destructive

enough of his adversaries assertion; and if you be the man I take you for, you will not deny they are so. For certainly, no consequence can be more palpable than this; the church of Rome doth err in this or that, therefore it is not infallible. And this perhaps you perceived yourself, and therefore demanded not since they be not fundamental, what imports it whether we hold them or no, simply; but, forasmuch as concerns our possibility to be saved. As if we were not bound by the love of God and the love of truth to be zealous in the defence of all truths, that are any way profitable, though not simply necessary to salvation! Or, as if any good man could satisfy his conscience without being so affected and resolved! Our Saviour himself having assured us, that* "he that shall break one of his least commandments (some whereof you pretend are concerning venial sins, and consequently the keeping of them not necessary to salvation) and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven."

7. But then it imports very much, though not for the possibility that you may be saved, yet for the probability that you will be so: because the holding of these errors, though it did not merit, might yet occasion damnation: as the doctrine of indulgences may take away the fear of purgatory, and the doctrine of purgatory the fear of hell; as you do well know it does too frequently. So that though a godly man might be saved with these errors, yet by means of them, many are made vicious, and so damned. By them, I say, though not for them. No godly layman, who is verily persuaded that there is neither impiety nor su-

* Matt. v. 19.

perstition in the use of your Latin service shall be damned, I hope, for being present at it; yet the want of that devotion, which the frequent hearing the offices understood, might happily beget in them, the want of that instruction and edification which it might afford them, may very probably hinder the salvation of many which might otherwise have been saved. Besides, though the matter of an error may be only something profitable, not necessary, yet the neglect of it may be a damnable sin; as, not to regard venial sins is in the doctrine of your schools mortal. Lastly, as venial sins, you say, dispose men to mortal; so the erring from some profitable, though lesser truth, may dispose a man to error in greater matters: as, for example, the belief of the pope's infallibility is, I hope, not unpardonably damnable to every one that holds it; yet if it be a falsehood (as most certainly it is) it puts a man into a very congruous disposition to believe antichrist, if he should chance to get into that see.

8. Ad §. 3. "In his distinctions of points fundamental and not fundamental, he may seem, you say, to have touched the point, but does not so indeed: because, though he says, there are some points so fundamental, as that all are obliged to believe them explicitly; yet he tells you not whether a man may disbelieve any other points of faith, which are sufficiently presented to his understanding, as truths revealed by Almighty God." Touching which matter of sufficient proposal, I beseech you to come out of the clouds, and tell us roundly and plainly, what you mean by "points of faith sufficiently propounded to a man's understanding, as truths revealed by God." Perhaps

you mean such as the person, to whom they are proposed, understands sufficiently to be truths revealed by God. But how then can he possibly choose but believe them? Or how is it not an apparent contradiction, that a man should disbelieve what himself understands to be a truth; or any Christian what he understands or but believes to be testified by God? D. Potter might well think it superfluous to tell you this is damnable; because indeed it is impossible. And yet one may very well think, by your saying, as you do hereafter, that "the impiety of heresy consists in calling God's truth in question," that this should be your meaning. Or do you esteem all those things sufficiently presented to his understanding as Divine truths, which by you, or any other man, or any company of men whatsoever, are declared to him to be so? I hope you will not say so; for this were to oblige a man to believe all the churches, and all the men in the world, whensoever they pretend to propose Divine revelations. D. Potter, I assure you from him, would never have told you this neither. Or do you mean by sufficiently propounded as Divine truths, all that your church propounds for such? That you may not neither; for the question between us is this: whether your church's proposition be a sufficient proposition? And therefore, to suppose this, is to suppose the question; which you know in reasoning is always a fault. Or, lastly, do you mean (for I know not else what possibly you can mean) by sufficiently presented to his understanding, as revealed by God, that which, all things considered, is so proposed to him, that he might, and should, and would believe it to be true and revealed by God, were it

not for some voluntary and avoidable fault of his own that interposeth itself between his understanding and the truth presented to it: this is the best construction that I can make of your words; and, if you speak of truths thus proposed and rejected, let it be as damnable as you please to deny or disbelieve them. But then I cannot but be amazed to hear you say, that D. Potter never tells you whether there be any other points of faith, besides those which we are bound to believe explicitly, which a man may deny or disbelieve, though they be sufficiently presented to his understanding as truths revealed or testified by Almighty God; seeing the light itself is not more clear than D. Potter's declaration of himself for the negative in this question, p. 245—250, of his book: where he treats at large of this very argument, beginning his discourse thus: "It seems fundamental to the faith, and for the salvation of every member of the church, that he acknowledge and believe all such points of faith, as whereof he may be convinced that they belong to the doctrine of Jesus Christ. To this conviction he requires three things: clear revelation, sufficient proposition, and capacity and understanding in the hearer. For want of clear revelation, he frees the church before Christ, and the disciples of Christ, from any damnable error, though they believed not these things, which he that should now deny were no Christian. To sufficient proposition he requires two things: 1. That the points be perspicuously laid open in themselves. 2. So forcibly, as may serve to remove reasonable doubts to the contrary, and sa-

teachable mind concerning it, against the

principles in which he hath been bred to the contrary. This proposition (he says) is not limited to the pope or church, but extended to all means whatsoever, by which a man may be convinced in conscience, that the matter proposed is Divine revelation; which he professes to be done sufficiently, not only when his conscience doth expressly bear witness to the truth; but when it would do so, if it were not choked and blinded by some unruly and unmortified lust in the will: the difference being not great between him that is wilfully blind, and him that knowingly gainsayeth the truth. The third thing he requires, is capacity and ability to apprehend the proposal, and the reasons of it: the want whereof excuseth fools and madmen, &c. But where there is no such impediment, and the will of God is sufficiently propounded, there (saith he) he that opposeth is convinced of error; and he who is thus convinced, is an heretic; and heresy is a work of the flesh, which excludeth from salvation (he means without repentance). And hence it followeth, that it is fundamental to a Christian's faith, and necessary for his salvation, that he believes all revealed truths of God, whereof he may be convinced that they are from God." This is the conclusion of D. Potter's discourse; many passages whereof you take notice of in your subsequent disputations, and make your advantage of them. And therefore I cannot but say again, that it amazeth me to hear you say, that he declines this question, and never tells you whether or no there be any other points of faith, which being sufficiently propounded as Divine revelations, may be denied and disbelieved. He tells you plainly, there are none such; and

therefore you cannot say that he tells you not whether there be any such. Again, it is almost as strange to me, why you should say, this was the only thing in question, whether a man may deny or disbelieve any point of faith, sufficiently presented to his understanding as a truth revealed by God. For to say, that any thing is a thing in question, methinks, at the first hearing of the words, imports, that it is by some affirmed, and denied by others. Now you affirm, I grant; but what protestant ever denied, that it was a sin to give God the lie? which is the first and most obvious sense of these words. Or, which of them ever doubted, that to disbelieve is then a fault, when the matter is so proposed to a man, that he might and should, and were it not for his own fault, would believe it? Certainly, he that questions either of these, justly deserves to have his wits called in question. Produce any one protestant that ever did so, and I will give you leave to say, it is the only thing in question. But then I must tell you, that your ensuing argument, viz. To deny a truth witnessed by God is damnable, but of two that disagree, one must of necessity deny some such truth, therefore one only can be saved—is built upon a ground clean different from this postulate. For though it be always a fault to deny what either I do know, or should know, to be testified by God; yet that, which by a cleanly conveyance you put in the place hereof, to deny a truth witnessed by God simply, without the circumstance of being known or sufficiently proposed, is so far from being certainly damnable, that it may be many times done without any the least fault at all. As if God should

testify something to a man in the Indies, I that had no assurance of this testification should not be obliged to believe it. For in such cases the rule of the law hath place, *Idem est non esse et non apparere;* not to be at all, and not to appear to me, is to me all one. "If I had not come and spoken unto you (saith our Saviour) you had had no sin."

10. As little necessity is there for that which follows: that "of two disagreeing in a matter of faith, one must deny some such truth." Whether by [such] you understand, testified at all by God; or, testified or sufficiently propounded. For it is very possible, the matter in controversy may be such a thing where God hath not at all declared himself, or not so fully and clearly, as to oblige all men to hold one way; and yet be so overvalued by the parties in variance, as to be esteemed a matter of faith, and one of those things, of which our Saviour says, "He that believeth not shall be damned," Who sees not that it is possible two churches may excommunicate and damn each other for keeping Christmas ten days sooner or later; as well as Victor excommunicated the churches of Asia, for differing from him about Easter-day? and yet I believe you will confess, that God had not then declared himself about Easter, nor hath now about Christmas. Anciently some good catholic bishops excommunicated and damned others for holding there were antipodes; and in this question I would fain know on which side was the sufficient proposal. The contra-remonstrants differ from the remonstrants about the point of predetermination as a matter of faith; I would know in this thing also, which way

God hath declared himself; whether for predetermination, or against it. Stephen, bishop of Rome, held it as a matter of faith and apostolic tradition, that heretics gave true baptism: others there were, and they as good catholics as he that held that this was neither matter of faith, nor matter of truth. Justin Martyr, and Irenæus, held the doctrine of the Millenaries as a matter of faith: and though Justin Martyr deny it, yet you, I hope, will affirm, that some good Christians held the contrary. St. Augustine, I am sure, held the communicating of infants as much apostolic tradition, as the baptizing of them: whether the bishop and the church of Rome of his time, held so too, or held otherwise, I desire you to determine. But, sure I am, the church of Rome at this present holds the contrary. The same St. Augustine held it no matter of faith, that the bishops of Rome were judges of appeals from all parts of the church catholic, no not in major causes and major persons: whether the bishop or church of Rome did then hold the contrary, do you resolve me; but now I am resolved that they do so. In all these differences, the point in question is esteemed and proposed by one side at least as a matter of faith, and by the other rejected, as not so: and either this is to disagree in matters of faith, or you will have no means to shew that we do disagree. Now then to shew you how weak and sandy the foundation is, on which the whole fabric both of your book and church depends, answer me briefly to this dilemma: either in these oppositions, one of the opposite parts erred damnably, and denied God's truth sufficiently propounded; or they did not. If they did, then they which do deny God's truth

sufficiently propounded, may go to heaven; and then you are rash and uncharitable in excluding us, though we were guilty of this fault. If not, then there is no such necessity, that of two disagreeing about a matter of faith, one should deny God's truth sufficiently propounded: and so the major and minor of your argument are proved false. Yet though they were as true as gospel, and as evident as mathematical principles, the conclusion (so impertinent is it to the premises) might still be false. For that which naturally issues from these propositions is not — therefore one only can be saved: but—therefore one of them does something that is damnable. But with what logic, or what charity, you can infer either as the immediate production of the former premises, or as a corollary from this conclusion—therefore one only can be saved, I do not understand; unless you will pretend, that this consequence is good—such a one doth something damnable, therefore he shall certainly be damned: which whether it be not to overthrow the article of our faith, which promises remission of sins upon repentance; and consequently to ruin the gospel of Christ, I leave it to the pope and cardinals to determine. For if against this it be alleged, that no man can repent of the sin wherein he dies: this nuce I have already stopped, by shewing, that if it be a sin of ignorance, this is no way incongruous.

11. Ad §. 4. You proceed in slighting and disgracing your adversary, pretending his objections are mean and vulgar, and such as have been answered a thousand times. But if your cause were good, these arts would be needless. For though some of his objections have been often shifted, by

nen* that make a profession of devising shifts and evasions to save themselves and their religion from the pressure of truth, by men that are resolved they will say something, though they can say nothing to purpose; yet I doubt not to make it appear, that neither by others have they been truly and really satisfied; and that the best answer you can give them, is to call them mean and vulgar objections.

12. Ad. §. 5. But his pains might have been spared: for the substance of his discourse is in a sermon of Dr. Usher's, and confuted four years ago by Paulus Veridicus. — It seems then, the substance of your Reply is in Paulus Veridicus, and so your pains also might well have been spared. But had there been no necessity to help and piece out your confuting his arguments with disgracing his person (which you cannot do) you would have considered, that to them who compare Dr. Potter's book and the Archbishop's sermon, this aspersion will presently appear a poor detraction, not to be answered, but scorned. To say nothing, that in D. Potter, being to answer a book by express command from royal authority, to leave any thing material unsaid, because it had been said before, especially being spoken at large, and without any relation to the discourse which he was to answer,

* I mean the divines of Doway; whose profession we have in your Belgic Expurgatorius, p. 12. *in censura Bertrami*, in these words: "Seeing in other ancient catholics, we tolerate, extenuate, and excuse, very many errors, and devising some shift, often deny them, and put upon them a convenient sense when they are objected to us in disputations and conflicts with our adversaries; we see no reason why Bertram may not deserve the same equity."

had been a ridiculous vanity, and fond prevarication.

13. Ad. §. 6. In your sixth parag. I let all pass saving only this—that a persuasion, that men of different religions (you must mean, or else you speak not to the point, Christians of divers opinions and communions) may be saved, is a most pernicious heresy, and even a ground of atheism. What strange extractions chemistry can make I know not; but sure I am, he that by reason would infer this conclusion — that there is no God; from this ground — that God will save men in different religions, must have a higher strain in logic, than you or I have hitherto made shew of. In my apprehension, the other part of the contradiction—that there is a God, should much rather follow from it. And whether contradictions will flow from the same fountain, let the learned judge. Perhaps you will say, you intended not to deliver here a positive and measured truth, and which you expected to be called to account for; but only a high and tragical expression of your just detestation of the wicked doctrine against which you write: if you mean so, I let it pass; only I am to advertise the less wary reader, that passionate expressions, and vehement asseverations are no arguments, unless it be of the weakness of the cause that is defended by them, or the man that defends it. And to remember you of what Boethius says of some such things as these—*Nubila mens est, hæc ubi regnant.* For my part, I am not now in a passion; neither will I speak one word, which I think I cannot justify to the full: and I say, and will maintain, that to say, that Christians of different opinions and communions; (such, I mean, who

hold all those things that are simply necessary to salvation) may not obtain pardon for the errors wherein they die ignorantly by a general repentance; is so far from being a ground of atheism, that to say the contrary, is to cross in diameter a main article of our creed, and to overthrow the gospel of Christ.

14. §. 7 and 8. To the two next parag. I have but two words to say. The one is, that I know no protestants that hold it necessary to be able to prove a perpetual visible church distinct from your's. Some perhaps undertake to do so, as a matter of courtesy; but I believe you will be much to seek for any one that holds it necessary. For though you say, that Christ hath promised there shall be a perpetual visible church; yet you yourselves do not pretend, that he hath promised there shall be histories and records always extant of the professors of it in all ages; nor that he hath any where enjoined us to read those histories, that we may be able to shew them.

15. The other is, that Brerely's great exactness, which you magnify so and amplify, is no very certain demonstration of his fidelity. A romance may be told with as much variety of circumstances, as a true story.

16. Ad. 9 and 10. §. Your desires that I would in this rejoinder, avoid impertinences: not impose doctrines upon which you disclaim: set down the substance of your reasons faithfully and entirely: not weary the reader with unnecessary quotations: object nothing to you which I can answer myself, or which may be returned upon myself: and, lastly (which you repeat again at the end of your Preface) speak as clearly and distinctly

and univocally as possibly I can, are all very reasonable, and shall be by me most punctually and fully satisfied. Only I have reason to complain, that you give us rules only, and not good example in keeping them. For in some of these things I shall have frequent occasion to shew, that *Medice, cura teipsum*, may very justly be said unto you; especially for objecting what might very easily have been answered by you, and may be very justly returned upon you.

17. To your ensuing demands, though some of them be very captious and ensnaring; yet I will give you as clear and plain and ingenuous answers as possibly I can.

18. Ad. 11. §. To the first, then, about the perpetuity of the visible church: my answer is —that I believe our Saviour, ever since his ascension, hath had in some place or other a visible true church on earth; I mean a company of men, that professed at least so much truth as was absolutely necessary for their salvation. And I believe, that there will be somewhere or other such a church to the world's end. But the contrary doctrine, I do at no hand believe to be a damnable heresy.

19. Ad. §. 12. To the second, What visible church there was before Luther, disagreeing from the Roman? I answer, that before Luther there were many visible churches, in many things disagreeing from the Roman: but not that the whole catholic church disagreed from her, because she herself was a part of the whole, though much corrupted. And to undertake to name a catholic church disagreeing from her, is to make her no part of it, which we do not, nor need not pretend. And for men agreeing with protestants in all

points, we will then produce them, when you shall either prove it necessary to be done, which you know we absolutely deny; or when you shall produce a perpetual succession of professors, which in all points have agreed with you, and disagreed from you in nothing. But this my promise, to deal plainly with you, I conceive, and so intended it to be very like his, who undertook to drink up the sea, upon condition, that he to whom the promise was made, should first stop the rivers from running in. For this unreasonable request which you make to us, is to yourselves so impossible, that in the next age after the apostles, you will never be able to name a man, whom you can prove to have agreed with you in all things, nay, (if you speak of such, whose works are extant, and unquestioned) whom we cannot prove to have disagreed from you in many things. Which I am so certain of, that I will venture my credit and my life upon it.

20. Ad. §. 13. To the third, Whether, seeing there cannot be assigned any visible true church distinct from the Roman, it follows not that she erred not fundamentally? I say, in our sense of the word fundamental, it does follow. For if it be true, that there was then no church distinct from the Roman, then it must be, either because there was no church at all, which we deny: or because the Roman church was the whole church; which we also deny: or, because she was a part of the whole, which we grant. And if she were a true part of the church, then she retained those truths which were simply necessary to salvation, and held no errors, which were inevitably and unpardonably destructive of it. For this is precisely

necessary to constitute any man or any church a member of the church catholic. In our sense therefore of the word fundamental, I hope she erred not fundamentally: but in your sense of the word, I fear she did: that is, she held something to be Divine revelation, which was not; something not to be, which was.

21. Ad. §. 14. To the fourth, How could it be damnable to maintain her errors, if they were not fundamental? I answer, 1. Though it were not damnable, yet if it were a fault, it was not to be done. For a venial sin with you is not damnable; yet you say, it is not to be committed for the procuring any good: *Non est faciendum malum vel minimum, ut eveniat bonum vel maximum.* It is damnable to maintain an error against conscience, though the error in itself, and to him that believes it, be not damnable. Nay, the profession not only of an error, but even of a truth, if not believed, when you think on it again, I believe you will confess to be a mortal sin; unless you will say, hypocrisy and simulation in religion is not so. 2. Though we say, the errors of the Roman church were not destructive of salvation, but pardonable even to them that died in them, upon a general repentance; yet we deny not, but in themselves they were damnable. Nay, the very saying they were pardonable, implies they need pardon, and therefore in themselves were damnable: damnable meritoriously, though not effectually. As a poison may be deadly in itself, and yet not kill him, that together with the poison takes an antidote: or as felony may deserve death, and yet not bring it on him that obtains

22. Ad. §. 15. To the fifth, How can they be excused from schism, who forsook her communion upon pretence of errors which were not damnable? I answer, all that we forsake in you, is only the belief and practice, and profession of your errors. Hereupon you cast us out of your communion: and then with a strange and contradictious and ridiculous hypocrisy, complain that we forsake it. As if a man should thrust his friend out of doors, and then be offended at his departure. But for us not to forsake the belief of your errors, having discovered them to be errors, was impossible; and therefore to do so, could not be damnable, believing them to be errors. Not to forsake the practice and profession of them, had been damnable hypocrisy; supposing that (which you vainly run away with, and take for granted) those errors in themselves were not damnable. Now to do so, and, as matters now stand, not to forsake your communion, is apparently contradictious; seeing the condition of your communion is, that we must profess to believe all your doctrines not only not to be damnable errors (which will not content you), but also to be certain and necessary and revealed truths. So that to demand, why we forsook your communion upon pretence of errors which are not damnable, is in effect to demand why we forsook it upon our forsaking it? For to pretend that there are errors in your church, though not damnable, is *ipso facto*, to forsake your communion, and to do that which both in your account, and, as you think, in God's account, puts him that does so out of your communion. So that either you must free your church

damnable and not damnable; or whether you will or no, you must free us from schism: for schism there cannot be, in leaving your communion, unless we were obliged to continue in it. Man cannot be obliged by man, but to what either formally or virtually he is obliged by God; for, all just power is from God. God, the eternal truth, neither can nor will oblige us to believe any the least and the most innocent falsehood to be a Divine truth, that is, to err, not to profess a known error, which is to lie. So that if you require the belief of any error among the conditions of your communion, our obligation to communicate with you ceaseth, and so the imputation of schism to us vanisheth into nothing; but lies heavy upon you for making our separation from you just and necessary, by requiring unnecessary and unlawful conditions of your communion. Hereafter, therefore, I intreat you, let not your demand be, how could we forsake your communion without schism, seeing you erred not damnably? But how could we do so without schism, seeing you erred not at all: which if either you do prove, or we cannot disprove it, we will (I at least will for my part) return to your communion, or subscribe myself schismatic. In the mean time, μένωμεν ὥσπερ ἐσμεν.

23. Yet notwithstanding all your errors, we do not renounce your communion totally and absolutely, but only leave communicating with you in the practice and profession of your errors. The trial whereof will be to propose some form of worshipping God, taken wholly out of Scripture; and herein if we refuse to join with you, then, and

t till then, may you justly say, we have utterly d absolutely abandoned your communion.

24. Ad. §. 16. Your sixth demand I have already satisfied in my answers to the second and the fourth; and in my reply Ad. §. 2. toward the end. And though you say, your repeating must be excused, yet I dare not be so confident, and therefore forbear it.

25. Ad. §. 17. To the seventh, Whether error against any one truth sufficiently propounded, as testified by God, destroy not the nature and unity of faith, or, at least, is not a grievous offence, excluding salvation? I answer, if you propose, as you seem to do, the proposition so sufficient, that the party to whom it is made is convinced that it is from God; so that the denial of it involves also with it the denial of God's veracity, any such error destroys both faith and salvation. But if the proposal be only so sufficient, not that the party to whom it is made is convinced, but only that he should, and, but for his own fault, would have been convinced of the Divine verity of the doctrine proposed; the crime then is not so great; for the belief of God's veracity may still consist with such an error. Yet a fault I confess it is, and (without repentance) damnable, if, all circumstances considered, the proposal be sufficient. But then I must tell you, that the proposal of the present Roman church is only pretended to be sufficient for this purpose, but is not so; especially all the rays of the Divinity, which they pretend to shine so conspicuously in her proposals, being so darkened and even extinguished with a cloud of contradiction, from Scripture, reason, and the ancient church.

26. Ad. §. 18. To the eighth, How of disagreeing protestants, both parts may hope for salvation, seeing some of them must needs err against some truth testified by God? I answer, the most disagreeing protestants that are, yet thus far agree; 1. That those books of Scripture, which were never doubted of in the church, are the undoubted word of God, and a perfect rule of faith. 2. That the sense of them, which God intended, whatsoever it is, is certainly true; so that they believe implicitly even those very truths against which they err; and why an implicit faith, in Christ and his word, should not suffice as well as an implicit faith in your church; I have desired to be resolved by many of your side, but never could. 3. That they are to use their best endeavours to believe the Scripture in the true sense, and to live according to it. This if they perform (as I hope many on all sides do) truly and sincerely, it is impossible but that they should believe aright in all things necessary to salvation; that is, in all those things which appertain to the covenant between God and man in Christ; for so much is not only plainly, but frequently, contained in Scripture. And believing aright touching the covenant, if they for their parts perform the condition required of them, which is sincere obedience, why should they not expect that God will perform his promise, and give them salvation? For, as for other things, which lie without the covenant, and are therefore less necessary, if by reason of the seeming conflict, which is oftentimes between Scripture and reason, and authority on the one side; and Scripture, reason, and authority, on the other; if by reason of the variety of

tempers, abilities, educations, and unavoidable prejudices, whereby men's understandings are variously formed and fashioned, they do embrace several opinions, whereof some must be erroneous; to say, that God will damn them for such errors, who are lovers of him, and lovers of truth, is to rob man of his comfort, and God of his goodness; it is to make man desperate, and God a tyrant. But they deny truths testified by God, and therefore shall be damned.—Yes, if they knew them to be thus testified by him, and yet would deny them; that were to give God the lie, and questionless damnable. But if you should deny a truth, which God had testified, but only to a man in the Indies (as I said before), and this testification you had never heard of, or at least had no sufficient reason to believe that God had so testified, would not you think it a hard case to be damned for such a denial? Yet consider, I pray, a little more attentively, the difference between them, and you will presently acknowledge, the question between them is not at any time, or in any thing, whether God says true or no; or whether he says this or no: but, supposing he says this, and says true, whether he means this or no. As for example; between Lutherans, Calvinists, and Zuinglians, it is agreed that Christ spake these words, "This is my body;" and that, whatsoever he meant in saying so is true: but what he meant, and how he is to be understood, that is the question. So that though some of them deny a truth by God intended, yet you can with no reason or justice accuse them of denying the truth of God's testimony, unless you can plainly shew, that God hath declared, and that plainly and clearly, what

was his meaning in these words: I say plainly and clearly; for he that speaks obscurely and ambiguously, and no where declares himself plainly, sure he hath no reason to be much offended if he be mistaken. When, therefore, you can shew, that in this and all other their controversies, God hath interposed his testimony on one side or other; so that either they do see it, and will not; or, were it not for their own voluntary and avoidable fault, might and should see it, and do not; let all such errors be as damnable as you please to make them. In the meanwhile, if they suffer themselves neither to be betrayed into their errors, nor kept in them by any sin of their will; if they do their best endeavour to free themselves from all errors, and yet fail of it through human frailty; so well am I persuaded of the goodness of God, that if in me alone should meet a confluence of all such errors of all the protestants in the world, that were thus qualified, I should not be so much afraid of them all, as I should be to ask pardon for them. For, whereas that which you affright us with, of calling God's veracity in question, is but a panic fear, a fault that no man thus qualified is or can be guilty of; to ask pardon of simple and purely involuntary errors is tacitly to imply, that God is angry with us for them, and that were to impute to him the strange tyranny of requiring brick, when he gives no straw; of expecting to gather, where he strewed not; to reap, where he sowed not; of being offended with us for not doing what he knows we cannot do. This I say upon a supposition, that they do their best endeavours to know God's will and do it; which he

that denies to be possible, knows not what he says; for he says, in effect, that men cannot do what they can do; for to do what a man can do, is to do his best endeavour. But because this supposition, though certainly possible, is very rare and admirable; I say, secondly, that I am verily persuaded, that God will not impute errors to them as sins, who use such a measure of industry, in finding truth, as human prudence and ordinary discretion (their abilities and opportunities, their distractions and hindrances, and all other things considered) shall advise them unto, in a matter of such consequence. But if herein also we fail, then our errors begin to be malignant, and justly imputable, as offences against God, and that love of his truth which he requires in us. You will say then, that for those erring protestants, which are in this case, which evidently are far the greater part, they sin damnably in erring, and therefore there is little hope of their salvation. To which I answer, that the consequence of this reason is somewhat strong against a protestant; but much weakened by coming out of the mouth of a papist. For all sins with you are not damnable; and therefore protestant errors might be sins, and yet not damnable. But yet, out of courtesy to you, we will remove this rub out of your way; and for the present suppose them mortal sins: and is there then no hope of salvation for him that commits them? Not, you will say, if he die in them without repentance; and such protestants you speak of, who without repentance die in their errors. Yea, but what if they die in their errors with repentance? Then I hope you will have charity enough to think they may be

saved. Charity Mistaken* takes it indeed for granted, that this supposition is destructive of itself; and that it is impossible and incongruous, that a man should repent of those errors wherein he dies; or die in those whereof he repents. But it was wisely done of him to take it for granted; for most certainly, he could not have spoken one word of sense for the confirmation of it. For seeing protestants believe, as well as you, God's infinite and most admirable perfections in himself, more than most worthy of all possible love: seeing they believe, as well as you, his infinite goodness to them, in creating them of nothing; in creating them according to his own image; in creating all things for their use and benefit; in streaming down his favours on them every moment of their lives; in designing them, if they serve him, to infinite and eternal happiness; in redeeming them, "not with corruptible things," but the precious blood of his beloved Son; seeing they believe, as well as you, his infinite goodness and patience towards them, in expecting their conversion, in wooing, alluring, leading, and by all means which his wisdom can suggest unto him, and man's nature is capable of, drawing them to repentance and salvation: seeing they believe these things as well as you, and, for aught you know, consider them as much as you (and if they do not, it is not their religion, but they that are to blame), what can hinder, but that the consideration of God's most infinite goodness to them, and their own almost infinite wickedness against him, God's Spirit co-operating with them, may raise

them to a true and sincere and cordial love of God? And seeing sorrow for having injured or offended the person beloved, or when we fear we may have offended him, is the most natural effect of true love; what can hinder, but that love which hath ofttimes constrained them to lay down their lives for God (which our Saviour assures us is the noblest sacrifice we can offer) may produce in them an universal sorrow for all their sins, both which they know they have committed, and which they fear they may have? In which number, their being negligent, or not dispassionate, or not unprejudicate enough in seeking the truth, and the effect thereof, their errors, if they be sins, cannot but be comprised. In a word, what should hinder, but that that prayer—*Delicta sua quis intelligit?* "Who can understand his faults? Lord, cleanse thou me from my secret sins," may be heard and accepted by God, as well from a protestant that dies in some errors, as from a papist that dies in some other sins of ignorance, which perhaps he might more easily have discovered to be sins, than a protestant could his errors to be errors? As well from a protestant, that held some error, which (as he conceived) God's word, and his reason (which is also in some sort God's word) led him unto; as from a Dominican, who perhaps took up his opinion upon trust, not because he had reason to believe it true, but because it was the opinion of his order; for the same man, if he had light upon another order, would, in all probability, have been of the other opinion: for what else is the cause, that generally all the Dominicans are of one opinion, and all the Jesuits of the other? I say, from a Dominican who took up his opinion upon trust;

and that such an opinion (if we believe the writers of your order) as, if it be granted true, it were not a point-matter what opinions any man held, or what actions any man did; for the best would be as bad as the worst, and the worst as good as the best. And yet such is the partiality of your hypocrisy, that, of disagreeing papists, neither shall deny the truth testified by God, but both may hope for salvation: but of disagreeing protestants (though they differ in the same thing) one side must deny God's testimony, and be incapable of salvation. That a Dominican through culpable negligence, living and dying in his error, may repent of it, though he knows it not; or be saved, though he do not: but if a protestant do the very same thing, in the very same point, and die in his error, his case is desperate. The sum of all that hath been said to this demand, is this:—1. That no erring protestant denies any truth testified by God, under this formality, as testified by him; nor which they know or believe to be testified by him. And therefore it is an horrible calumny in you to say — they call God's veracity in question: for God's undoubted and unquestioned veracity is to them the ground why they do hold all they do hold: neither do they hold any opinion so stiffly, but they will forego it rather than this one—that all which God says is true. 2. God hath not so clearly and plainly declared himself in most of these things which are in controversy between protestants, but that an honest man, whose heart is right to God, and one that is a true lover of God, and of his truth, may, by reason of the conflict of contrary reasons on both sides, very easily, and therefore excusably

mistake, and embrace error for truth, and reject truth for error. 3. If any protestant or papist be betrayed into, or kept in, any error, by any sin of his will (as it is to be feared many millions are) such error is as the cause of it, sinful and damnable; yet not exclusive of all hope of salvation, but pardonable, if discovered, upon a particular explicit repentance; if not discovered, upon a general and implicit repentance for all sins, known and unknown: in which number all sinful errors must of necessity be contained.

27. Ad. §. 19. To the ninth, wherein you are so urgent for a particular catalogue of fundamentals: I answer almost in your own words, that we also constantly urge and require to have a particular catalogue of your fundamentals, whether they be written verities, or unwritten traditions, or church definitions, all which, you say, integrate the material object of your faith: in a word, of all such points as are defined and sufficiently proposed; so that whosoever denies, or doubts of any of them, is certainly in the state of damnation. A catalogue, I say, in particular of the proposals; and not only some general definition, or description, under which you lurk deceitfully, of what and what only is sufficiently proposed: wherein yet you do not very well agree.* For many of you hold the pope's proposal *ex cathedra*, to be sufficient and obliging; some a council without a pope; some of neither of them severally, but only

* This great diversity of opinions among you, touching this matter, if any man doubt of it, let him read Franciscus Picus Mirandula in l. Theorem. in Exposit. Theor. quarti; et Th. Waldensis, tom. iii. De Sacramentalibus, Doct. 3. fol. 5. and he shall be fully satisfied that I have done you no injury.

both together; some not this neither in matter of manners, which Bellarmine acknowledges, and tells us, it is all one in effect, as if they denied it sufficient in matter of faith; some not in matter of faith neither think this proposal infallible, without the acceptation of the church universal; some deny the infallibility of the present church, and only make the tradition of all ages the infallible propounder: yet, if you were agreed, what and what only is the infallible propounder, this would not satisfy us; nor yet to say, that all is fundamental which is propounded sufficiently by him: for though agreeing in this, yet you might still disagree whether such or such a doctrine were propounded or not; or, if propounded, whether sufficiently, or only unsufficiently. And it is so known a thing, that in many points you do so, that I assure myself you will not deny it. Therefore we constantly urge and require a particular and perfect inventory of all those Divine revelations, which, you say, are sufficiently propounded; and that, such an one to which all your church will subscribe, as neither redundant, nor deficient; which, when you give in with one hand, you shall receive a particular catalogue of such points, as I call fundamental, with the other. Neither may you think me unreasonable in this demand, seeing upon such a particular catalogue of your sufficient proposals as much depends, as upon a particular catalogue of our fundamentals. As for example, whether or no a man do not err in some point defined and sufficiently proposed: and whether or no those that differ among you, differ in fundamentals; which, if they do, one heaven (by your own rule) cannot receive them

all. Perhaps you will here complain, that
is not to satisfy your demand, but to avoid it,
to put you off, as the Areopagites did hard cas
ad diem longissimum, and bid you come agai
hundred years hence. To deal truly, I did s
tend it should be. Neither can you say, my
ing with you is injurious, seeing I require not
of you, but that, what you require of others,
should shew it possible to be done, and just
necessary to be required. For, for my part, I
great reason to suspect, it is neither the one
the other: for whereas the verities which
delivered in Scripture, may be very fitly div
into such as were written because they were
cessary to be believed (of which rank are t
only, which constitute and make up the cove
between God and man in Christ); and then
as are necessary to be believed not in themsel
but only by accident, because they were writ
of which rank are many matters of history
prophecy, of mystery, of policy, of economy,
such like, which are evidently not intrinsica
the covenant: now to sever exactly and pun
ally these verities one from the other, what is
cessary in itself, and antecedently to the writ
from what is but only profitable in itself, and
cessary only because written, is a business of
treme difficulty, and extreme little necessity.
first, he that will go about to distinguish, e
cially in the story of our Saviour, what
written because it was profitable, from what
written because necessary, shall find an intri
piece of business of it, and almost impossible
he should be certain he hath done it, when
hath done it. And then it is apparently unne

sary to go about it, seeing he that believes all, certainly believes all that is necessary; and he that doth not believe all (I mean all the undoubted parts of the undoubted books of Scripture) can hardly believe any; neither have we reason to believe he doth so. So that, that protestants give you not a catalogue of fundamentals, it is not from tergiversation (as you suspect, who for want of charity to them always suspect the worst) but from wisdom and necessity: for they may very easily err in doing it; because, though all which is necessary be plain in Scripture; yet all which is plain, is not therefore written because it was necessary: for what greater necessity was there, that I should know St. Paul left his cloak at Troas, than those worlds of miracles which our Saviour did, which were never written? And when they had done it, it had been to no purpose; there being, as matters now stand, as great necessity of believing those truths of Scripture, which are not fundamental, as those that are. You see then what reason we have to decline this hard labour, which you, a rigid task-master, have here put upon us. Yet instead of giving you a catalogue of fundamentals, with which I dare say you are resolved, before it come, never to be satisfied; I will say that to you, which, if you please, may do you as much service; and this it is—that it is sufficient for any man's salvation, that he believe the Scripture; that he endeavour to believe it in the true sense of it, as far as concerns his duty; and that he conform his life unto it either by obedience or repentance. He that does so (and all protestants, according to the *dictamen* of their religion, should do so) may be secure that he cannot err funda-

mentally. And they that do so, cannot differ in fundamentals. So that, notwithstanding their differences, and your presumption, the same heaven may receive them all.

28. Ad. §. 20. Your tenth and last request is, to know distinctly what is the doctrine of the protestant English church, in these points; and what my private opinion? Which shall be satisfied when the church of England hath expressed herself in them; or when you have told us what is the doctrine of your church in the question of predetermination, or the immaculate conception.

29. Ad. §. 21 and 22. These answers, I hope, in the judgment of indifferent men, are satisfactory to your questions, though not to you; for I have either answered them, or given you a reason why I have not. Neither, for aught I can see, have I flitted from things considered in their own nature, to accidental or rare circumstances; but told you my opinion plainly what I thought of your errors in themselves; and what as they were qualified or malignified with good or bad circumstances. Though I must tell you truly, that I see no reason, the question being of the damnableness of error, why you should esteem ignorance, incapacity, want of means to be instructed, accidental and rare circumstances: as if knowledge, capacity, having means of instruction concerning the truth of your religion, or ours, were not as rare and unusual in the adverse part of either, as ignorance, incapacity, and want of means of instruction; especially how erroneous conscience can be a rare thing in those that err; or how unerring conscience is not much more rare, I am [illegible]prehend. So that, to consider men

of different religions (the subject of this controversy) in their own nature, and without circumstances, must be to consider them, neither as ignorant, nor as knowing; neither as having, nor as wanting, means of instruction; neither as with capacity, nor without it; neither with erroneous, nor yet with unerring conscience. And then what judgment can you pronounce of them, all the goodness and badness of an action depending on the circumstances? Ought not a judge, being to give sentence of an action, to consider all the circumstances of it? Or is it possible he should judge rightly, that doth not so? Neither is it to purpose, that circumstances being various, cannot be well comprehended under any general rule: for though under any general rule they cannot, yet under many general rules they may be comprehended. The question here is, you say, whether men of different religions may be saved? Now the subject of this question is an ambiguous term, and may be determined and invested with diverse and contrary circumstances; and, accordingly, contrary judgments are to be given of it. And who can then be offended with D. Potter for distinguishing before he defines (the want whereof is the chief thing that makes defining dangerous); who can find fault with him for saying, "If, through want of means of instruction, incapacity, invincible or probable ignorance, a man die in error, he may be saved. But if he be negligent in seeking the truth, unwilling to find it, either doth see it, and will not, or might see it, and will not, that his case is dangerous, and without repentance desperate." This is all that D. Potter says, neither rashly damning all that are of

a different opinion from him, nor securing any that are in matter of religion sinfully, that is willingly, erroneous. The author of this reply (I will abide by it) says the very same thing; neither can I see what adversary he hath in the main question but his own shadow; and yet, I know not out of what frowardness, finds fault with D. Potter for affirming that which himself affirms: and to cloud the matter, whereas the question is, whether men by ignorance, dying in error, may be saved? would have them considered neither as erring, nor ignorant. And when the question is, whether the errors of the papists be damnable? to which we answer, that to them that do or might know them to be errors, they are damnable; to them that do not, they are not: he tells us that this is to change the state of the question; whereas, indeed, it is to state the question, and free it from ambiguity before you answer it; and to have recourse to accidental circumstances; as if ignorance were accidental to error, or as if a man could be considered as in error, and not be considered as in ignorance of the truth from which he errs! Certainly, error against a truth must needs presuppose a nescience of it; unless you will say that a man may at once resolve for a truth, and resolve against it; assent to it, and dissent from it; know it to be true, and believe it not to be true. Whether knowledge and opinion touching the same thing may stand together, is made a question in the schools: but he that would question whether knowing a thing, and doubting of it; much more, whether knowing it to be true, and believing it to be false, may stand together, deserves, without question, no other answer but

laughter. Now if error and knowledge cannot consist, then error and ignorance must be inseparable. He then that professeth your errors may well be considered either as knowing or as ignorant. But him that does err indeed, you can no more conceive without ignorance, than long without quantity, virtuous without quality, a man and not a living creature, to have gone ten miles and not to have gone five, to speak sense and not to speak. For as the latter in all these is implied in the former, so is ignorance of a truth supposed in error against it. Yet such a man, though not conceivable without ignorance simply, may be very well considered either as with or without voluntary and sinful ignorance. And he that will give a wise answer to this question,—whether a papist dying a papist may be saved according to God's ordinary proceeding? must distinguish him according to these several considerations, and say, he may be saved; if his ignorance were either invincible, or at least unaffected, and probable; if otherwise without repentance he cannot.

To the rest of this Preface I have nothing to say, saving what hath been said, but this; that it is no just exception to an argument, to call it vulgar and thread-bare: truth can neither be too common nor superannuated, nor reason ever worn out. Let your answers be solid and pertinent, and we will never find fault with them for being old or common.

CHARITY

MAINTAINED BY CATHOLICS.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

The state of the question; with a summary of the reasons for which, amongst men of different religions, one side only can be saved.

is in act of pronouncing the like heavy doom against Roman catholics? For, not satisfied with much uncivil language, in affirming the Roman church* many ways to have played the harlot, and in that regard deserved a bill of divorce from Christ, and detestation of Christians; in styling her that proud† and curst dame of Rome, which takes upon her to revel in the house of God; in talking of an idol‡ to be worshipped at Rome; he comes at length to thunder out his fearful sentence against her: 'For that§ mass of errors (saith he) in judgment and practice, which is proper to her, and wherein she differs from us, we judge a reconciliation impossible, and to us (who are convicted in conscience of her corruptions) damnable.' And in another place he saith: 'For us who‖ are convinced in conscience, that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors.' By the acerbity of which censure, he doth not only make himself guilty of that which he judgeth to be an heinous offence in others, but freeth us from all colour of crime by this his unadvised recrimination. For, if Roman catholics be likewise convicted in conscience of the errors of protestants, they may, and must, in conformity to the Doctor's own rule, judge a reconciliation with them to be also damnable. And thus, all the want of charity, so deeply charged on us, dissolves itself into this poor wonder—Roman catholics believe in their conscience, that the religion they profess is true, and the contrary false.

* Page 11. † Ibid. ‡ Page 4, edit. 1.
§ Page 20. ‖ Page 81.

2. "Nevertheless, we earnestly desire, and take care, that our doctrine may not be defamed by misinterpretation. Far be it from us, by way of insultation, to apply it against protestants, otherwise than as they are comprehended under the generality of those, who are divided from the only one true church of Christ our Lord, within the communion whereof he hath confined salvation. Neither do we understand, why our most dear countrymen should be offended, if the universality be particularized under the name of protestants, first given* to certain Lutherans, who, protesting that they would stand out against the imperial decrees, in defence of the Confession exhibited at Augsburg, were termed protestants, in regard of such their protesting: which Confessio Augustana, disclaiming from, and being disclaimed by, Calvinists and Zuinglians, our naming or exemplifying a general doctrine under the particular name of protestantism, ought not in any particular manner to be odious in England.

"Moreover, our meaning is not, as misinformed persons may conceive, that we give protestants over to reprobation; that we offer no prayers in hope of their salvation; that we hold their case desperate; God forbid! We hope, we pray for, their conversion; and sometimes we find happy effects of our charitable desires. Neither is our censure immediately directed to particular persons. The tribunal of particular judgments is God's alone, when any man, esteemed a protestant, leaveth to live in this world, we do not instantly with precipitation avouch that he is lodged

in hell. For we are not always acquainted with what sufficiency or means he was furnished for instruction; we do not penetrate his capacity to understand his catechist; we have no revelation what light may have cleared his errors, or contrition retracted his sins, in the last moment before his death. In such particular cases, we wish more apparent signs of salvation, but do not give any dogmatical sentence of perdition. How grievous sins disobedience, schism, and heresy are, is well known; but to discern how far the natural malignity of those great offences might be checked by ignorance, or by some such lessening circumstance, is the office rather of prudence than of faith.

4. "Thus we allow protestants as much charity, as D. Potter spares us, for whom, in the words abovementioned, and elsewhere, he* makes ignorance the best hope of salvation. Much less comfort can we expect from the fierce doctrine of those chief protestants, who teach, that for many ages before Luther Christ had no visible church upon earth. Not these men alone, or such as they, but even the Thirty-nine Articles, to which the English protestant clergy subscribes, censure our belief so deeply, that ignorance can scarce, or rather not at all, excuse us from damnation. Our doctrine of transubstantiation, is affirmed to be repugnant to the plain words of † Scripture; our masses to be blasphemous ‡ fables, with much more to be seen in the Articles themselves. In a certain confession of the Christian faith, at the end of their books of Psalms collected into metre, and printed *cum priviligio regis regali,* they call us idolaters and limbs

* See page 39. † Art. xxviii. ‡ Art xxxi.

of antichrist; and having set down a catalogue of our doctrines, they conclude, that for them we shall after the general resurrection be damned to unquenchable fire.

5. "But yet, lest any man should flatter himself with our charitable mitigations, and thereby wax careless in search of the true church, we desire him to read the conclusion of the Second Part, where this matter is more explained.

6. "And because we cannot determine what judgment may be esteemed rash, or prudent, except by weighing the reasons upon which it is grounded, we will here, under one aspect, present a summary of those principles, from which we infer, that protestancy in itself unrepented destroys salvation; intending afterwards to prove the truth of every one of the grounds, till, by a concatenation of sequels, we fall upon the conclusion, for which we are charged with want of charity.

7. "Now this is our gradation of reasons: Almighty God having ordained mankind to a supernatural end of eternal felicity, hath, in his holy providence, settled competent and convenient means whereby that end may be attained. The universal grand origin of all such means, is the incarnation and death of our blessed Saviour, whereby he merited internal grace for us; and founded an external visible church provided and stored with all those helps, which might be necessary for salvation. From hence it followeth, that in this church, among other advantages, there must be some effectual means to beget and conserve faith, to maintain unity, to discover and condemn heresies, to appease and reduce schisms, and to determine all controversies in religion. For without

such means the church should not be furnished v helps sufficient to salvation, nor God afford s cient means to attain that end to which himself dained mankind. This means to decide contro sies in faith and religion (whether it should be Holy Scripture or whatsoever else) must be end with an universal infallibility, in whatsoever it poundeth for a Divine truth; that is, as revea spoken, or testified by Almighty God, whethe matter of its nature be great or small. For, were subject to error in any one thing, we c not in any other yield it infallible assent; bec we might with good reason doubt whethe chanced not to err in that particular.

8. "Thus far all must agree to what we said, unless they have a mind to reduce fait opinion. And even out of these grounds al without further proceeding, it undeniably foll that of two men dissenting in matters of f great or small, few or many, the one canno saved without repentance, unless ignorance dentally may in some particular person plead cuse. For, in that case of contrary belief, must of necessity be held to oppose God's v or revelation sufficiently represented to his un standing by an infallible propounder; which position to the testimony of God is undoubte damnable sin, whether otherwise, the thing so tified, be in itself great or small. And thus have already made good what was promised i argument of this chapter, that amongst men o ferent religions, one only is capable of being sa

9. "Nevertheless, to the end that men know in particular what is the said infal means upon which we are to rely in all thin

cerning faith, and accordingly may be able to judge in what safety or danger, more or less, they live; and because D. Potter descendeth to divers particulars about Scriptures and the church, &c. we will go forward, and prove, that although Scripture be in itself most sacred, infallible and Divine, yet it alone cannot be to us a rule, or judge, fit and able to end all doubts and debates emergent in matters of religion; but that there must be some external, visible, public, living judge, to whom all sorts of persons, both learned and unlearned, may without danger of error have recourse; and in whose judgment they may rest for the interpreting and propounding of God's word or revelation. And this living judge we will most evidently prove to be no other, but that holy catholic, apostolic, and visible church, which our Saviour purchased with the effusion of his most precious blood.

10. " If once therefore it be granted, that the church is that means which God hath left for the deciding all controversies in faith, it manifestly will follow, that she must be infallible in all her determinations, whether the matters of themselves be great or small; because, as we said above, it must be agreed, on all sides, that if that means which God hath left to determine controversies were not infallible in all things proposed by it, it could not settle in our minds a firm and infallible belief of any one.

11. " From this universal infallibility of God's [illegible] that whosoever wittingly de-

testifieth: the averring whereof were not only a fundamental error, but would overthrow the very foundation of all fundamental points; and, therefore, without repentance, could not possibly stand with salvation.

12. " Out of these grounds we will shew, that although the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental be good and useful, as it is delivered and applied by catholic divines, to teach what principal articles of faith Christians are obliged explicitly to believe; yet, that it is impertinent to the present purpose of excusing any man from grievous sin, who knowingly disbelieves, that is, believes the contrary of that which God's church proposeth as Divine truth. For it is one thing, not to know explicitly something testified by God; and another, positively to oppose what we know he hath testified. The former may often be excused from sin, but never the latter, which only is the case in question.

13. " In the same manner shall be demonstrated, that to allege the Creed, as containing all articles of faith, necessary to be explicitly believed, is not pertinent to free from sin the voluntary denial of any other point known to be defined by God's church. And this was sufficient to overthrow all that D. Potter allegeth concerning the Creed; though yet, by way of supererogation, we will prove, that there are divers important matters of faith which are not mentioned at all in the Creed.

14. " From the aforesaid main principle, that God hath always had, and always will have, on earth, a church visible, within whose communion salvation must be hoped; and infallible, whose

definitions we ought to believe; we will prove, that Luther, Calvin, and all other, who continue the division in communion, or faith, from that visible church, which at and before Luther's appearance was spread over the world, cannot be excused from schism and heresy, although they opposed her faith but in one only point; whereas it is manifest, they dissent from her in many and weighty matters, concerning as well belief as practice.

15. "To these reasons drawn from the virtue of faith, we will add one other taken from *charitas propria*, the virtue of charity, as it obligeth us, not to expose our soul to hazard of perdition, when we can put ourselves in a way much more secure, as we will prove that of the Roman catholics to be.

16. "We are then to prove these points: First, That the infallible means to determine controversies, in matters of faith, is the visible church of Christ. Secondly, That the distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental maketh nothing to our present question. Thirdly, That to say the Creed contains all fundamental points of faith, is neither pertinent nor true. Fourthly, That both Luther and all them who, after him, persist in division from the communion and faith of the Roman church, cannot be excused from schism. Fifthly, Nor from heresy. Sixthly and lastly, That in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, protestants be in a state of sin, as long as they remain divided from the Roman church. And these six points shall be several arguments

very strange, that protestants should charge us so deeply with want of charity, for only teaching, that both they and we cannot be saved, seeing themselves must affirm the like of whosoever opposeth any least point delivered in Scripture, which they hold to be the sole rule of faith. Out of which ground they must be enforced, to let all our former inferences pass for good: for, is it not a grievous sin, to deny any one truth contained in Holy Writ? is there in such denial any distinction between points fundamental and not fundamental sufficient to excuse from heresy? is it not impertinent to allege the Creed containing all fundamental points of faith, as if, believing it alone, we were at liberty to deny all other points of Scripture? In a word, according to protestants, oppose not Scripture, there is no error against faith; oppose it in any least point, the error, if Scripture be sufficiently proposed (which proposition is also required before a man can be obliged to believe even fundamental points) must be damnable. What is this, but to say with us, of persons contrary in whatsoever point of belief, one party only can be saved. And D. Potter mnst not take it ill, if catholics believe they may be saved in that religion for which they suffer. And if by occasion of this doctrine, men will still be charging us with want of charity, and be resolved to take scandal where none is given, we must comfort ourselves with that grave and true saying of St. Gregory, 'If scandal * be taken from declaring a truth, it is better to permit scandal than forsake the truth.' But the solid grounds

* St. Greg. Hom. 7 in Ezek.

of our assertion, and the sincerity of our intention, in uttering what we think, yields us confidence, that all will hold for most reasonable the saying of Pope Gelasius to Anastasius the Emperor, ' Far be it from the Roman Emperor, that he should hold it for a wrong, to have truth declared to him!' Let us therefore begin with that point which is the first that can be controverted betwixt protestants, and us, forasmuch as concerns the present question, and is contained in the argument of the next ensuing chapter."

THE

ANSWER TO THE FIRST CHAPTER:

Shewing, that the adversary grants the former question, and proposeth a new one; and that there is no reason why, among men of different opinions and communions, one side only can be saved.

in conscience of her errors, not to forsake her in them, or to be reconciled unto her, is damnable: therefore, if Roman catholics be convicted in conscience of the errors of protestants, they may and must judge a reconciliation with them damnable; and consequently to judge so, is no more uncharitable in them, than it is in the Doctor to judge as he doth.—All this I grant; nor would any protestant accuse you of want of charity, if you went no further: if you judged the religion of protestants damnable to them only who profess it, being convicted in conscience that it is erroneous. For if a man judge some act of virtue to be a sin, in him it is a sin indeed: so you have taught us (p. 19). So, if you be convinced, or rather, to speak properly, persuaded in conscience, that our religion is erroneous, the profession of it, though itself most true, to you would be damnable. This therefore I subscribe very willingly, and withal, that if you said no more, D. Potter and myself should not be to papists only, but even to protestants, as uncharitable as you are: for I shall always profess and glory in this uncharitableness of judging hypocrisy a damnable sin. Let hypocrites then and dissemblers on both sides pass. It is not towards them, but good Christians; not to protestant professors, but believers, that we require your charity. What think you of those that believe so verily the truth of our religion, that they are resolved to die in it, and, if occasion were, to die for it? What charity have you for them? What think ye of those that, in the days of our fathers, laid down their lives for it? Are you content that they should be saved, or do you hope they may be so? Will you grant, that, notwithstanding their

errors, there is good hope they might die with repentance? And, if they did so, certainly they are saved. If you will do so, this controversy is ended. No man will hereafter charge you with want of charity. This is as much, as either we give you, or expect of you, while you remain in your religion. But then you must leave abusing silly people, with telling them (as your fashion is) that—protestants confess papists may be saved, but papists confess not so much of protestants; therefore yours is the safer way, and in wisdom and charity to our own souls we are bound to follow. For, granting this, you grant as much hope of salvation to protestants, as protestants do to you. If you will not, but will still affirm, as Charity Mistaken doth, that protestants, not dissemblers, but believers, without a particular repentance of their religion cannot be saved; this, I say, is a want of charity, into the society whereof D. Potter cannot be drawn but with palpable and transparent sophistry. For, I pray Sir, what dependance is there between these propositions: we that hold protestant religion false should be damned if we should profess it; therefore they also shall be damned, that hold it true? Just as if you should conclude, because "he that doubts is damned if he eat," therefore he that doth not doubt, is damned also if he eat. And therefore though your religion to us, and ours to you, if professed against conscience, would be damnable; yet may it well be uncharitable to define it shall be so, to them that profess either this or that according to conscience. This recrimination therefore upon D. Potter wherewith you begin, is a plain fallacy: and, I fear, your proceedings will be answerable

2. Ad. §. 2. In this paragraph, protestants are thus far comforted, that they are not sent to hell without company; which the poet tells us, is the miserable comfort of miserable men. Then we in England are requested not to be offended with the name of protestants. Which is a favour I shall easily grant, if by it be understood those that protest, not against imperial edicts, but against the corruptions of the church of Rome.

3. §. 3—6. That you give us not over to reprobation, that you pray and hope for our salvation—if it be a charity, it is such a one as is common to Turks, and Jews, and pagans with us. But that which follows, is extraordinary; neither do I know any man that requires more of you than there you pretend to. For there you tell us, that when any man esteemed a protestant dies, you do not instantly avouch that he is lodged in hell.—Where the word esteemed is ambiguous: for it may signify, esteemed truly, and esteemed falsely. He may be esteemed a protestant that is so: and he may be esteemed a protestant that is not so. And therefore I should have had just occasion to have laid to your charge the transgression of your own chief prescription, which, you say, truth exacts at our hands, that is, to speak clearly or distinctly, and not to walk in darkness;—but that your following words, to my understanding, declare sufficiently, that you speak of both sorts. For there you tell us, that the reasons why you damn not any man that dies with the esteem of a protestant, are, 1. Because you are not always acquainted with what sufficiency of means he was furnished for instruction;—you must mean touching the falsehood of his own religion, and the truth of

yours: which reason is proper to those that are protestants in truth, and not only in estimation. 2. Because you do not penetrate his capacity to understand his cathechist; which is also peculiar to those, who, for want of capacity (as you conceive) remain protestants indeed, and are not only so accounted. 3. Because you have no revelation what light may clear his errors, which belongs to those which are esteemed protestants, but indeed were not so. 4. Because you have no revelation what contrition might have retracted his sins: which reason being distinct from the former, and divided from it by the disjunctive particle, *or*, insinuates unto us, that though no light did clear the errors of a dying protestant; yet contrition might, for aught you know, retract his sins; which appropriates this reason also to protestants truly so esteemed. I wish, with all my heart, that in obedience to your own prescription, you had expressed yourself in this matter more fully and plainly. Yet that which you say, doth plainly enough afford us these corollaries:

1. That whatsoever protestant wanteth capacity, or, having it, wanteth sufficient means of instruction to convince his conscience of the falsehood of his own, and the truth of the Roman, religion, by the confession of his most rigid adversaries, may be saved, notwithstanding any error in his religion.
2. That nothing hinders, but that a protestant, dying a protestant, may die with contrition for all his sins.
3. That if he do die with contrition, he may and shall be saved.

4. All those acknowledgments we have from

you while you are, as you say, stating, but as I conceive, granting, the very point in question; which was, as I have already proved out of C. M. whether, without uncharitableness, you may pronounce, that protestants, dying in the belief of their religion, and without particular repentance and dereliction of it, cannot possibly be saved; which C. M. affirms universally, and without any of your limitations. But this presumption of his you thus qualify, by saying, that this sentence cannot be pronounced truly, and therefore sure not charitably; neither of those protestants that want means sufficient to instruct and convince them of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own; nor of those, who, though they have neglected the means they might have had, died with contrition, that is, with a sorrow for all their sins, proceeding from the love of God. So that, according to your doctrine, it shall remain upon such only as either were, or, but for their own fault, might have been, sufficiently convinced of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own, and yet die in it without contrition. Which doctrine, if you would stand to, and not pull down and pull back with one hand what you give and build with the other, this controversy were ended; and I should willingly acknowledge that which follows in your fourth paragraph, that you allow protestants as much charity as D. Potter allows you. But then I must entreat you to alter the argument of this chapter, and not to go about to give us reasons, why amongst men of different religions, one side only can be saved absolutely; which your reasons drive at: but you must temper the crudeness of

your assertion, by saying—one side only can be saved, unless want of conviction, or else repentance, excuse the other. Besides, you must not only abstain from damning any protestant in particular, but, from affirming in general, that protestants dying in their religion cannot be saved: for you must always remember to add this caution—unless they were excusably ignorant of the falsehood of it, or died with contrition. And then, considering that you cannot know, whether or no, all things considered, they were convinced sufficiently of the truth of your religion, and the falsehood of their own, you are obliged by charity to judge the best, and hope they are not. Considering again, that, notwithstanding their errors, they may die with contrition, and that it is no way improbable that they do so, and the contrary you cannot be certain of, you are bound in charity to judge and hope they do so. Considering, thirdly, and lastly, that if they die not with contrition, yet it is very probable they may die with attrition; and that this pretence of yours, that contrition will serve without actual confession, but attrition will not, is but a nicety or fancy; or rather, to give it the true name, a device of your own, to serve ends and purposes—God having no where declared himself, but that wheresoever he will accept of that repentance, which you are pleased to call contrition, he will accept of that which you call attrition: for, though he like best the bright flaming holocaust of love, yet he rejects [illegible]eth not, the smoaking flax of that

your doctrine rise up in judgment against y
uncharitable practice) you must not only no
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alms, and offering sacrifice, which usually you
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conceive so well of protestants, as to assure y
selves they go directly to heaven). These th
when you do, I shall believe you think as cl
tably as you speak: but, until then, as he sai
the comedy, *Quid verba audiam, cum facta vid*
so may I say to you, *Quid verba audiam, cum*
non videam? To what purpose should you giv
charitable words, which presently you re
again, by denying us your charitable actions?
as these things you must do, if you will stan
and make good this pretended charity, so m
tell you again and again, that one thing you
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your errors, any way hinder, but they may
as well of you, upon repentance, as I do

the fierce doctrine, which God knows who teacheth, that Christ for many ages before Luther had no visible church upon earth, will be mild enough, if you conceive them to mean (as perhaps they do) by no visible church, none pure and free from corruptions, which in your judgment is all one with no church. But the truth is, the corruption of the church, and the destruction of it, is not all one. For, if a particular man or church may (as you confess they may) hold some particular errors, and yet be a member of the church universal; why may not the church hold some universal error, and yet be still the church? especially seeing, you say, it is nothing but opposing the doctrine of the church that makes an error damnable, and it is impossible, that the church should oppose the church—I mean, that the present church should oppose itself. And then for the English protestants, though they censure your errors deeply, yet, by your favour, with their deepest censure it may well consist, that invincible ignorance may excuse you from damnation for them: for you yourself confess, that ignorance may excuse errors, even in fundamental articles of faith: so that a man so erring shall not offend at all in such his ignorance or error:—they are your own words. Pref. §. 22. And, again, with their heaviest censures it may well consist, that your errors, though in themselves damnable, yet may prove not damning to you, if you die with true repentance for all your sins, known and unknown.

5. Thus much charity, therefore, if you stand to what you have said, is interchangeably granted by each side to the other, that neither religion is so fatally destructive, but that by ignorance or

repentance salvation may be had on both sides: though with a difference that keeps papists still on the more uncharitable side. For whereas we conceive a lower degree of repentance (that which they call attrition) if it be true, and effectual, and convert the heart of the penitent, will serve in them: they pretend (even this author which is most charitable towards us) that without contrition there is no hope for us. But, though protestants may not obtain this purchase at so easy a rate as papists; yet (even papists being judges) they may obtain: and, though there is no entrance for them but at the only door of contrition, yet they may enter; heaven is not inaccessible to them. Their errors are no such impenetrable isthmuses between them and salvation, but that contrition may make a way through them. All their schism and heresy is no such fatal poison, but that, if a man join with it the antidote of a general repentance, he may die in it, and live for ever. Thus much then being acknowledged, I appeal to any indifferent reader, whether C. M. be not by his hyperaspist forsaken in the plain field, and the point in question granted to D. Potter, viz. That protestancy, even without a particular repentance, is not destructive of salvation. So that all the controversy remaining now, is not simply, whether protestancy unrepented destroys salvation? as it was at first proposed, but, whether protestancy in itself (that is, abstracting from ignorance and contrition) destroys salvation? So that, as a foolish fellow, who gave a knight the lie, desiring withal leave of him to set his knighthood aside, was answered by him, that he would not suffer any thing to be set aside that belonged unto

ing: so might we justly take it amiss, that conceiving, as you do, ignorance and repentance such necessary things for us, you are not more willing to consider us with them, than without them. For my part, such is my charity to you, that considering what great necessity you have, as much as any Christian society in the world, that these sanctuaries of ignorance and repentance should always stand open, I can very hardly persuade myself so much, as in my most secret consideration to divest you of these so needful qualifications: but whensoever your errors, superstitions, and impieties come into my mind (and, besides the general bonds of humanity and Christianity, my own particular obligations to many of you, such and so great, that you cannot perish without a part of myself) my only comfort is, amidst these agonies, that the doctrine and practice too of repentance is yet remaining in your church: and that, though you put on a face of confidence of your innocence, in point of doctrine, yet you will be glad to stand in the eye of mercy as well as your fellows, and not be so stout, as to refuse either God's pardon or the king's.

6. But, for the present, protestancy is called to the bar, and though not sentenced by you to death without mercy, yet arraigned of so much natural malignity (if not corrected by ignorance or contrition) as to be in itself destructive of salvation. Which controversy I am content to dispute with you, tying myself to follow the rules prescribed by you in your Preface. Only I am to remember you, that the adding of this limitation [in itself] hath made this a new question; and that this is not the conclusion for which you were charged

with want of charity: but that whereas, according to the grounds of your own religion—protestants may die in their supposed errors, either with excusable ignorance, or with contrition; and, if they do so, may be saved—you still are peremptory in pronouncing them damned. Which position, supposing your doctrine true, and ours false; as it is far from charity (whose essential character it is, to judge and hope the best, so I believe that I shall clearly evince this new, but more moderate assertion of yours to be far from verity, and that it is popery, and not protestancy, which in itself destroys salvation.

7. Ad. §. 7 and 8. In your gradation I shall rise so far with you as to grant, that Christ founded a visible church, stored with all helps necessary to salvation, particularly with sufficient means to beget and conserve faith, to maintain unity, and compose schisms, to discover and condemn heresies, and to determine all controversies in religion, which were necessary to be determined. For all these purposes he gave at the beginning (as we may see in the Epistle to the Ephesians) apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and doctors; who by word of mouth taught their contemporaries, and by writings (wrote indeed by some, but approved by all of them) taught their Christian posterity to the world's end, how all these ends, and that which is the end of all these ends, salvation, is to be achieved. And these means the providence of God hath still preserved, and so preserved, that they are sufficient for all these intents. I say sufficient, though, through the malice of men, not always effectual; for that the same means may be sufficient for the compassing

an end, and not effectual, you must not deny, who hold, that God gives to all men sufficient means of salvation, and yet that all are not saved. I said, also, sufficient to determine all controversies, which were necessary to be determined. For, if some controversies may for many ages be undetermined, and yet in the meanwhile men be saved; why should, or how can the church's being furnished with effectual means to determine all controversies in religion, be necessary to salvation; the end itself to which these means are ordained, being, as experience shews, not necessary? Plain sense will teach every man that the necessity of the means must always be measured by, and can never exceed, the necessity of the end. As if eating be necessary, only that I may live; then certainly, if I have no necessity to live, I have no necessity to eat: if I have no need to be at London, I have no need of a horse to carry me thither: if I have no need to fly, I have no need of wings. Answer me then I pray directly, and categorically; is it necessary that all controversies in religion should be determined? or, is it not? If it be, why is the question of predetermination, of the immaculate conception, of the pope's indirect power in temporalities, so long undetermined? If not, what is it but hypocrisy to pretend such great necessity of such effectual means for the achieving that end, which is itself not necessary? Christians therefore have, and shall have, means sufficient (though not always effectual) to determine, not all controversies, but all necessary to be determined. I proceed on farther with you, and grant that this means to decide controversies in faith and religion, must be endued with an universal in-

fallibility in whatsoever it propoundeth for a Divine truth. For if it may be false in any one thing of this nature, in any thing which God requires men to believe, we can yield unto it but a wavering and fearful assent in any thing. These grounds therefore I grant very readily, and give you free leave to make your best advantage of them. And yet, to deal truly, I do not perceive how from the denial of any of them it would follow, that faith is opinion; or, from the granting them, that it is not so. But, for my part, whatsoever clamour you have raised against me, I think no otherwise of the nature of faith, I mean historical faith, than generally both protestants and papists do; for I conceive it an assent to Divine revelations upon the authority of the revealer; which though in many things it differ from opinion (as commonly the word opinion is understood) yet in some things, I doubt not but you will confess, that it agrees with it. As first, That as opinion is an assent, so is faith also. Secondly, That as opinion, so faith, is always built upon less evidence than that of sense or science; which assertion you not only grant, but mainly contend for, in your sixth chapter. Thirdly and lastly, That as opinion, so faith, admits degrees; and that, as there may be a strong and weak opinion, so there may be a strong and weak faith. These things, if you will grant (as sure if you be in your right mind you will not deny any of them) I am well contented that this ill-founding word, opinion, should be discarded, and that among the intellectual habits you should seek out some other genus for faith. For I will never contend with any man about words, who grants my meaning.

8. But though the essence of faith exclude not all weakness and imperfection, yet may it be inquired, whether any certainty of faith, under the highest degree, may be sufficient to please God, and attain salvation? Whereunto I answer, that though men are unreasonable, God requires not any thing but reason: they will not be pleased without a down-weight; but God is contented if the scale be turned: they pretend, that heavenly things cannot be seen to any purpose, but by the mid-day light; but God will be satisfied, if we receive any degree of light which makes us leave the "works of darkness, and walk as children of the light:" they exact a certainty of faith above that of sense or science; God desires only that we believe the conclusion, as much as the premises deserve; that the strength of our faith be equal or proportionable to the credibility of the motives to it. Now, though I have, and ought to have, an absolute certainty of this thesis—all which God reveals for truth, is true—being a proposition, that may be demonstrated, or rather so evident to any one that understands it, that it needs it not; yet of this hypothesis—that all the articles of our faith were revealed by God—we cannot ordinarily have any rational and acquired certainty, more than moral, founded upon these considerations: First, That the goodness of the precepts of Christianity, and the greatness of the promises of it, shews it, of all other religions, most likely to come from the Fountain of Goodness. And then, that a constant, famous, and very general tradition, so credible, that no wise man doubts of any other which hath but the fortieth part of the credibility of this: such and so credible a tradition tells us, that God

himself hath set his hand and seal to the truth of this doctrine, by doing great, and glorious, and frequent miracles in confirmation of it. Now our faith is an assent to this conclusion, that the doctrine of Christianity is true: which being deduced from the former theses, which is metaphysically certain, and from the former hypotheses, whereof we can have but a moral certainty, we cannot possibly by natural means be more certain of it than of the weaker of the premises: as a river will not rise higher than the fountain from which it flows. For the conclusion always follows the worser part, if there be any worse, and must be negative, particular, contingent, or but morally certain, if any of the propositions from whence it is derived, be so: neither can we be certain of it in the highest degree, unless we be thus certain of all the principles whereon it is grounded. As a man cannot go, if either of his legs be weak: or as a building cannot be stable, if any one of the necessary pillars thereof be rotten and unsafe. Or as if a message be brought me from a man of undoubted credit with me, but by a messenger that I am in my confidence of the truth of the message cannot but be rebated and lessened by my diffidence of the relator.

9. Yet all this I say not, as if I thought that the Spirit of God, being implored by serious and humble prayer, and sincere obedience, may not will, by degrees advance his servants nearer, and give them a certainty of adherence beyond their certainty of evidence. But what God gives as a reward to believers, is one thing; and what he requires of all men, as their duty, is another; and

what he will accept of, out of grace and favour, is yet another. To those that believe, and live according to their faith, he gives by degrees the spirit of obsignation and confirmation, which makes them know (though how they know not) what they did but believe: and to be as fully and resolutely assured of the gospel of Christ, as those which heard it from Christ himself with their ears, which saw it with their eyes, which looked upon it, and whose hands handled the word of life. He requires all, that their faith should be (as I have said) proportionable to the motives and reasons enforcing to it; he will accept of the weakest and lowest degree of faith, if it be living and effectual unto true obedience. For he it is that "will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed." He did not reject the prayer of that distressed man that cried unto him, "Lord, I believe; Lord, help mine unbelief." He commands us to receive them that are weak in faith, and thereby declares, that he receives them. And as nothing avails with him, but faith which worketh by love; so any faith, if it be but as a grain of mustard-seed, if it work by love, shall certainly avail with him, and be accepted of him. Some experience makes me fear, that the faith of considering and discoursing men is like to be cracked with too much straining: and that being possessed with this false principle, that it is in vain to believe the gospel of Christ, with such a kind or degree of assent, as they yield to other matters of tradition; and finding, that their faith of it is to discernible, from the belief they give to

purpose; or else, though indeed they do believe it, yet to think they do not, and to cast themselves into wretched agonies and perplexities, as fearing they have not that, without which it is impossible to please God, and obtain eternal happiness. Consideration of this advantage, which the devil probably may make of this fancy, made me willing to insist somewhat largely on the refutation of it.

10. I return now thither from whence I have digressed, and assure you, concerning the grounds afore-laid, which were—that there is a rule of faith whereby controversies may be decided, which are necessary to be decided; and that this rule is universally infallible, that notwithstanding any opinion I hold, touching faith or any thing else, I may, and do believe them, as firmly as you pretend to do: and therefore you may build on in God's name; for, by God's help, I shall always embrace whatsoever structure is naturally and rationally laid upon them, whatsoever conclusion may to my understanding be evidently deduced from them. You say, out of them it undeniably follows, that, of two disagreeing in matter of faith, the one cannot be saved, but by repentance or ignorance: I answer, by distinction of those terms, two dissenting in a matter of faith: for it may be either in a thing which is indeed a matter of faith in the strictest sense, that is, something, the belief whereof God requires under pain of damnation; and so the conclusion is true, though the consequence of it from your former premises either is none at all, or so obscure, that I can hardly discern it: or, it may be, as it often falls out concerning a thing, which being indeed no

matter of faith, is yet overvalued by the parties at variance, and esteemed to be so: and in this sense it is neither consequent, nor true. The untruth of it I have already declared in my examination of your Preface: the inconsequence of it, is of itself evident; for, who ever heard of a wilder collection than this?

"God hath provided means sufficient to decide all controversies in religion necessary to be decided:

"This means is universally infallible:

"Therefore, of two that differ in any thing, which they esteem a matter of faith, one cannot be saved."

He that can find any connexion between these propositions, I believe will be able to find good coherence between the deaf plaintiff's accusation in the Greek epigram, and the deaf defendant's answer, and the deaf judge's sentence: and to contrive them all into a formal categorical syllogism.

11. Indeed, if the matter in agitation were plainly decided by this infallible means of diciding controversies, and the parties in variance knew it to be so, and yet would stand out in their dissension; this were, in one of them, direct opposition to the testimony of God, and undoubtedly a damnable sin. But if you take the liberty to suppose what you please, you may very easily conclude what you list. For, who is so foolish as to grant you these unreasonable postulates, that every emergent controversy of faith is plainly decided by the means of decision which God hath appointed; and that of the parties litigant, one is always such a convicted recusant as you pretend?

Certainly, if you say so, having no better warrant than you have, or can have, for it, this is more proper and formal uncharitableness than ever was charged upon you. Methinks, with much more reason, and much more charity, you might suppose that many of these controversies, which are now disputed among Christians (all which profess themselves lovers of Christ, and truly desirous to know his will and do it) are either not decidable by that means which God has provided, and so not necessary to be decided: or, if they be, yet not so plainly and evidently, as to oblige all men to hold one way: or, lastly, if decidable, and evidently decided, yet you may hope, that the erring party, by reason of some veil before his eyes, some excusable ignorance or unavoidable prejudice, doth not see the question to be decided against him, and so opposeth not that which he doth know to be the word of God, but only that which you know to be so, and which he might know, were he void of prejudice. Which is a fault, I confess, but a fault which is incident even to good and honest men very often: and not of such a gigantic disposition as you make it, to fly directly upon God Almighty, and to give him the lie to his face.

12. Ad. §. 9—16. In all this long discourse you only tell us what you will do, but do nothing. Many positions there are, but proofs of them you offer none, but reserve them to the chapters following; and there, in their proper places, they shall be examined. The sum of all your assumpts collected by yourself, §. 16. is this:

That the infallible means of determining controversies is the visible church.

That the distinction of points, fundamental and not fundamental, maketh nothing to the present question.

That to say, the Creed containeth all fundamentals, is neither pertinent nor true.

That whosoever persist in division from the communion and faith of the Roman church, are guilty of schism and heresy.

That in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, protestants are in a state of sin, while they remain divided from the Ro-

truth in question; but thus rather: The church of Rome is so, and protestants know it to be so; therefore, in opposing her, they impute to God, that either he deceives them, or is deceived himself. For as I may deny something which you upon your knowledge have affirmed, and yet never disparage your honesty, if I never knew that you affirmed it: so I may be undoubtedly certain of God's omniscience, and veracity, and yet doubt of something which he hath revealed; provided, I do not know, nor believe, that he hath revealed it. So, that though your church be the appointed witness of God's revelations, yet, until you know that we know she is so, you cannot without foul calumny impute to us, that we charge God blasphemously with deceiving, or being deceived. You will say, perhaps, that this is directly consequent from our doctrine—that the church may err, which is directed by God in all her proposals. True, if we knew it to be directed by him, otherwise not; much less if we believe, and know the contrary. But, then, if it were consequent from our opinion, have you so little charity, as to say, that men are justly chargeable with all the consequences of their opinions? Such consequences, I mean, as they do not own, but disclaim; and if there were a necessity of doing either, would much rather forsake their opinion, than embrace these consequences? What opinion is there that draws after it such a train of potentous blasphemies, as that of the Dominicans by the judgment of the best writers of your own order? And will you say now, that the Dominicans are justly chargeable with all those blasphemies? If not, seeing our case (take it at the worst) is but the

same, why should not your judgment of us be the same? I appeal to all those protestants that have gone over to your side—whether, when they were most averse from it, they did ever deny or doubt of God's omniscience or veracity; whether they did ever believe, or were taught, that God did deceive them, or was deceived himself? Nay, I provoke to you yourself, and desire you to deal truly, and to tell us, whether you do in your heart believe, that we do indeed not believe the eternal veracity of the eternal verity? And, if you judge so strangely of us, having no better ground for it than you have or can have, we shall not need any farther proof of your uncharitableness towards us, this being the extremity of true uncharitableness. If not, then I hope, having no other ground but this (which sure is none at all) to pronounce us damnable heretics, you will cease to do so; and hereafter (as if your ground be true, you may do with more truth and charity) collect thus—They only err damnably, who oppose what they know God hath testified: but protestants sure do not oppose what they know God hath testified; at least, we cannot with charity say they do: therefore, they either do not err damnably, or with charity we cannot say they do so.

13. Ad. §. 17. Protestants (you say) according to their own grounds must hold, that of persons contrary in whatsoever point of belief one part only can be saved, therefore it is strangely done of them to charge papists with want of charity for holding the same. The consequence I acknowledge, but wonder much what it should be that lays upon protestants any necessity to do so! You tell us, it is their holding Scripture the sole

rule of faith: for this, you say, obligeth them to pronounce them damned, that oppose any least point delivered in Scripture. This I grant, if they oppose it after sufficient declaration, so that either they know it to be contained in Scripture, or have no just probable reason, and which may move an honest man to doubt, whether or no it be there contained. For to oppose, in the first case, in a man that believes the Scripture to be the word of God, is to give God the lie. To oppose in the second, is to be obstinate against reason: and therefore a sin, though not so great as the former. But then this is nothing to the purpose of the necessity of damning all those that are of contrary belief; and that for these reasons—First, Because the contrary belief may be touching a point not at all mentioned in Scripture; and such points, though indeed they be not matters of faith, yet by men in variance are often overvalued and esteemed to be so. So that, though it were damnable to oppose any point contained in Scripture, yet persons of contrary belief (as Victor and Polycrates, St. Cyprian and Stephen) might both be saved, because their contrary belief was not touching any point contained in Scripture. Secondly, Because the contrary belief may be about the sense of some place of Scripture which is ambiguous, and with probability capable of divers senses; and in such cases it is no marvel, and sure no sin, if several men go several ways. Thirdly, Because the contrary belief may be concerning points wherein Scripture may, with so great probability, be alleged on both sides, (which is a sure note of a point not necessary) that men of honest and upright hearts, true lovers of God and of

truth, such as desire, above all things, to know God's will and to do it, may, without any fault at all, some go one way and some another, and some (and those as good men as either of the former) suspend their judgment, and expect some Elias to solve doubts, and reconcile repugnances. Now in all such questions one side or other (whichsoever it is) holds that which indeed is opposite to the sense of the Scripture which God intended; for it is impossible that God should intend contradictions. But then this intended sense is not so fully declared, but that they which oppose it, may verily believe that they indeed maintain it, and have great shew of reason to induce them to believe so; and therefore are not to be damned, as men opposing that which they either know to be a truth delivered in Scripture, or have no probable reason to believe the contrary; but rather, in charity, to be acquitted and absolved, as men who endeavour to find the truth, but fail of it through human frailty.

This ground being laid, the answer to your ensuing interrogatories, which you conceive impossible, is very obvious and easy.

14. To the first: Whether it be not in any man a grievous sin to deny any one truth contained in Holy Writ? I answer—Yes, if he knew it to be so, or have no probable reason to doubt of it; otherwise not.

15. To the second: Whether there be in such denial any dictinction between fundamental and not fundamental, sufficient to excuse from heresy? I answer—Yes, there is such a distinction. But the reason is, because these points, either in themselves, or by accident, are fundamental, which are

evidently contained in Scripture, to him that knows them to be so: those not fundamental, which are there-hence deducible, but probably only, not evidently.

16. "To the third: Whether it be not impertinent, to allege the Creed, as containing all fundamental points of faith, as if believing it alone we were at liberty to deny all other points of Scripture? I answer, it was never alleged to any such purpose; but only as a sufficient, or rather more than a sufficient, summary of those points of faith, which were of necessity to be believed actually and explicitly; and that only of such, which were merely and purely *credenda*, and not *agenda*.

17. To the fourth, drawn as a corollary from the former: Whether this be not to say, that, of persons contrary in belief, one part only can be saved? I answer, by no means: for they may differ about points not contained in Scripture. They may differ about the sense of some ambiguous text of Scripture: they may differ about some doctrines, for and against which scriptures may be alleged with so great probability, as may justly excuse either part from heresy, and a self-condemning obstinacy. And, therefore, though D. Potter do not take it ill, that you believe yourselves may be saved in your religion, yet notwithstanding all that hath yet been pretended to the contrary, he may justly condemn you, and that out of your own principles, of uncharitable presumption, for affirming, as you do, that—no man can be saved out of it.

CHAP. II.

What is that means, whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding, and which must determine controversies in faith and religion?

"Of our estimation, respect, and reverence to Holy Scripture, even protestants themselves do in fact give testimony, while they possess it from us, and take it upon the integrity of our custody. No cause imaginable could avert our will from giving the function of supreme and sole judge to Holy Writ, if both the thing were not impossible in itself, and if both reason and experience did not convince our understanding, that, by this assertion, contentions are increased, and not ended. We acknowledge Holy Scripture to be a most perfect rule, forasmuch as a writing can be a rule: we only deny, that it excludes either Divine tradition, though it be unwritten, or an external judge to keep, to propose, to interpret it in a true, orthodox, and catholic sense. Every single book, every chapter, yea, every period of Holy Scripture is infallibly true, and wants no due perfection. But must we therefore infer, that all other books of Scripture are to be excluded, lest, by addition of them, we may seem to derogate from the perfection of the former? When the first books of the Old and New Testament were written, they did not exclude unwritten traditions, nor the authority of the church to decide controversies: and who

hath then so altered their nature, and filled the with such jealousies, as that now they cann agree for fear of mutual disparagement? Wh greater wrong is it for the written word to compartner now with the unwritten, than for t unwritten, which was once alone, to be afterwa joined with the written? Who ever heard, thi to commend the fidelity of a keeper, were to d authorize the thing committed to his custody? that, to extol the integrity and knowledge, and avouch the necessity of a judge in suits of la were to deny perfection in the law? Are there n in commonwealths, besides the laws, written a unwritten customs, judges appointed to decla both the one and the other as several occasio may require?

2. "That the Scripture alone cannot be jud in controversies of faith, we gather it very clea from the quality of a writing in general; from t nature of Holy Writ in particular, which must believed as true and infallible; from the editio and translations of it; from the difficulty to und stand it without hazard of error; from the inco veniences that must follow upon the ascribing sole judicature to it; and, finally, from the confe sions of our adversaries. And, on the other sid all these difficulties ceasing, and all other qualit requisite to a judge concurring in the visible chur of Christ our Lord, we must conclude, that she is to whom, in doubts concerning faith and re gion, all Christians ought to have recourse.

3. "The name, notion, nature, and propert of a judge cannot in common reason agree to a mere writing, which, be it otherwise in its kir never so highly qualified with sanctity and infa

bility, yet it must ever be, as all writings are, deaf, dumb, and inanimate. By a judge, all wise men understand a person endued with life and reason, able to hear, to examine, to declare his mind to the disagreeing parties, in such sort, as that each one may know whether the sentence be in favour of his cause, or against his pretence; and he must be appliable, and able to do all this, as the diversity of controversies, persons, occasions, and circumstances may require. There is a great and plain distinction between a judge and a rule: for, as in a kingdom, the judge has his rule to follow, which are the received laws and customs; so are they not fit or able to declare, or be judges to themselves, but that office must belong to a living judge. The Holy Scripture may be and is a rule, but cannot be a judge, because it being always the same, cannot declare itself any one time, or upon any one occasion, more particularly than upon any other; and let it be read over an hundred times, it will be still the same, and no more fit alone to terminate controversies in faith, than the law would be to end suits, if it were given over to the fancy and gloss of every single man.

4. "This difference betwixt a judge and a rule, D. Potter perceived, when, more than once having stiled the Scripture a judge, by way of correcting that term, he adds—or rather a rule; because he knew, that an inanimate writing could not be a judge. From hence also it was, that though protestants in their beginning affirmed Scripture alone to be the judge of controversies; yet, upon a more advised reflection, they changed the phrase, and said, that not Scripture but the Holy Ghost speaking in Scripture, is judge in controversies: a dif-

ference without a disparity. The Holy Ghost speaking only in Scripture, is no more intelligible to us than the Scripture in which he speaks: as a man speaking only in Latin, can be no better understood, than the tongue wherein he speaketh. And therefore to say, a judge is necessary for deciding controversies about the meaning of Scripture, is as much as to say, he is necessary to decide what the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture. And it were a conceit equally foolish and pernicious, if one should seek to take away all judges in the kingdom upon this nicety, that albeit laws cannot be judges, yet the law-maker speaking in the law may perform that office, as if the law-maker speaking in the law were with more perspicuity understood than the law whereby he speaketh.

5. " But though some writing were granted to have a privilege to declare itself upon supposition that it were maintained in being, and preserved entire from corruptions; yet it is manifest, that no writing can conserve itself, nor can complain, or denounce the falsifier of it; and therefore it stands in need of some watchful and not-erring eye to guard it, by means of whose assured vigilancy we may undoubtedly receive it sincere and pure.

6. " And, suppose it could defend from corruption, how could it assure us, that itself were canonical, and of infallible verity, by saying so? Of this very affirmation, there will remain the same question still; how it can prove itself to be infallibly true? Neither can there ever be an end of the like multiplied demands, till we rest in the external authority of some person or persons bearing witness to the world, that such or such a book

is Scripture; and yet, upon this point, according to protestants, all other controversies in faith depend.

7. "That Scripture cannot assure us that itself is canonical Scripture, is acknowledged by some protestants in express words, and by all of them in deeds. Mr. Hooker, whom D. Potter ranketh* among men of learning and judgment, saith, 'Of things† necessary, the very chiefest is to know what books we are to esteem holy; which point is confessed impossible for the Scripture itself to teach.' And this he proveth by the same argument, which we lately used, saying thus—'It is not‡ the word of God which doth, or possibly can assure us, that we do well to think it is his word. For, if any one book of Scripture did give testimony of all, yet still that Scripture, which giveth testimony to the rest, would require another Scripture to give credit unto it. Neither could we come to any pause whereon to rest, unless, besides Scripture, there were something which might assure us,' &c. And this he acknowledges to be the§ church. By the way, if of things necessary the very chiefest cannot possibly be taught by Scripture, as this man of so great learning and judgment affirmeth, and demonstratively proveth, how can the protestant clergy of England subscribe to their sixth article? wherein it is said of the Scripture—whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article

* Page 131.

† In his first book of Eccles. Polit. sect. 14. p. 68.

‡ Ibid. l. 2. sect. 4. p. 102.

§ L. 3. sect. 8. p. 1. 146, et alibi.

of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation:—and concerning their belief and profession of this article, they are particularly examined when they are ordained priests and bishops. With Hooker, his defendant Covel doth punctually agree. Whitaker likewise confesseth, that the question about canonical Scriptures, is defined to us, not by 'testimony of the private spirit, which (saith he) being private and secret, is* unfit to teach and refel others; but (as he acknowledgeth) by the† ecclesiastical tradition: an argument (saith he) whereby may be argued, and convinced, what books be canonical, and what be not.' Luther saith, 'This‡ indeed the church hath, that she can discern the word of God from the word of men:' as Augustine confesseth—that he believed the gospel, being moved by the authority of the church, which did preach this to be the gospel. Fulk teacheth—that the 'church§ hath judgment to discern true writings from counterfeit, and the word of God from the writing of men; and that this judgment she hath not of herself, but of the Holy Ghost.' And to the end that you may not be ignorant from what church you must receive Scriptures, hear your first patriarch Luther speaking against them, who (as he saith) brought in anabaptism, that so they might despite the pope. 'Verily (saith he) these‖ men build upon a weak foundation: for, by this means, they ought to deny the whole Scripture, and the office of preaching:

* Adv. Stap. l. 2. c. 6. p. 270. 357.
† Ibid. l. 2. c. 4. p. 300.
‡ L. de cap. Bab. tom. ii. Witt. f. 86.
§ In his Answer to a counterfeit Catholic, p. 5.
‖ Ep. con. Anab. ad duos Paroch. tom. ii. Ger. Witt.

for all these we have from the pope; otherwise we must go make a new Scripture.'

8. "But now in deeds they all make good, that without the church's authority no certainty can be had what Scripture is canonical, while they cannot agree in assigning the canon of the Holy Scripture. Of the Epistle of St. James Luther hath these words: 'The* Epistle of James is contentious, swelling, dry, strawy, and unworthy of an apostolical spirit.' Which censure of Luther, Illiricus acknowledgeth and maintaineth. Kemnitius teacheth—that the Second Epistle† of Peter, the Second and Third of John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the Epistle of Jude, and the Apocalypse of John, are apocryphal, as not having sufficient testimony‡ of their authority, and therefore that nothing in controversy can be proved out of these§ books. The same is taught by divers other Lutherans: and, if some other amongst them be of a contrary opinion since Luther's time, I wonder what new infallible ground they can allege, why they leave their master, and so many of his prime scholars? I know no better ground, than because they may with as much freedom abandon him, as he was bold to alter that canon of Scripture, which he found received in God's church.

9. "What books of Scripture the protestants of England hold for canonical, is not easy to affirm. In their sixth article, they say—'in the name of the Holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose

* Præf. in Epist. Jac. in ed. Jen.

† In Enchirid. p. 65.

‡ In Exam. Conc. Trid. par. 1. p. 55.

§ Ibid.

authority was never any doubt in the church.' What mean they by these words—that by the church's consent they are assured what Scriptures be canonical? This were to make the church judge, and not Scriptures alone. Do they only understand the agreement of the church to be a probable inducement? Probability is no sufficient ground for an infallible assent of faith. By this rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church) the whole Book of Esther must quit the canon, because some in the church have excluded it from the canon, as * Melito Asianus, †Athanasius, and ‡ Gregory Nazianzen. And Luther (if protestants will be content that he be in the church) saith, 'The Jews § place the Book of Esther in the canon; which yet, if I might be judge, doth rather deserve to be put out of the canon.' And of Ecclesiastes he saith, 'This‖ book is not full; there are in it many abrupt things: he wants boots and spurs, that is, he hath no perfect sentence, he rides upon a long reed, like me when I was in the monastery." And much more is to be read in him; who¶ saith further, that the said book was not written by Solomon, but by Syrach, in the time of the Maccabees, and that it is like to the Talmud (the Jews' Bible) out of many books heaped into one work, perhaps out of the library of King Ptolemeus. And further he saith, that**

* Apud. Euseb. l. iv. Hist. c. 26.

† In Synops.

‡ In Carm. de Genuinis Scrip.

§ Li. de serv. arb. con. Eras. tom. ii. Wit. fol. 471.

‖ In lat. serm. conviv. Fran. in 8 impr. anno. 571.

¶ In Ger. colloq. Lutheri ab Aurifabro ed Fran. tit. de lib. Vet. et Nov. Test. f. 379.

** Ib. tit. de Patriarch. et Proph. fol. 282.

he does not believe all to have been done, that there is set down. And he teacheth the * Book of Job to be as it were an argument for a fable (or comedy) to set before us an example of patience. And he † delivers this general censure of the prophets' books—'the sermons of no prophet were written whole and perfect; but their disciples and auditors snatched now one sentence, and then another, and so put them all into one book, and by this means the Bible was conserved.' If this were so, the book of the prophets, being not written by themselves, but promiscuously and casually by their disciples, will soon be called in question. Are not these errors of Luther fundamental? and yet, if protestants deny the infallibility of the church, upon what certain ground can they disprove these Lutheran and Luciferian blasphemies? O godly reformer of the Roman church! But to return to our English canon of Scripture. In the New Testament, by the abovementioned rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church) divers books of the New Testament must be discanonized, to wit, all those of which some ancients have doubted, and those which divers Lutherans have of late denied. It is worth the observation, how the beforementioned sixth article doth specify by name all the books of the Old Testament, which they hold for canonical; but those of the New, without naming any one, they shuffle over with this generality—'all the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account them canonical.' The mystery is easy to be unfolded. If they had descended to

* Tit. de lib. Vet. et Nov. Test. † Fol. 380.

particulars, they must have contradicted some of their chiefest brethren. 'As they are commonly received,' &c. I ask, by whom? By the church of Rome? Then, by the same reason they must receive divers books of the Old Testament, which they reject. By Lutherans? Then with Lutherans they may deny some books of the New Testament. If it be the greater, or less number of voices, that must cry up or down the canon of Scripture, our Roman canon will prevail: and among protestants the certainty of their faith must be reduced to an uncertain controversy of fact, whether the number of those who reject, or of those others who receive such and such Scriptures, be greater: their faith must alter according to years and days. When Luther first appeared, he and his disciples were the greater number of that new church; and so this claim (of being 'commonly received') stood for them, till Zuinglius and Calvin grew to some equal, or greater number than that of the Lutherans, and then this rule of 'commonly received' will canonize their canon against the Lutherans. I would gladly know, why, in the former part of their article, they say both of the Old and New Testament:—'In the name of the Holy Scripture, we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church:' and, in the latter part, speaking again of the New Testament, they give a far different rule, saying—'All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we receive and account them canonical.' This I say is a rule much different from the former (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church); for some books might be said to be

'commonly received,' although they were sometime doubted of by some. If to be 'commonly received,' pass for a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament, why not of the Old? Above all we desire to know, upon what infallible ground in some books they agree with us against Luther, and divers principal Lutherans, and in others jump with Luther against us? But seeing they disagree among themselves, it is evident, that they have no certain rule to know the canon of Scripture, in assigning whereof some of them must of necessity err; because of contradictory propositions, both cannot be true.

10. " Moreover, the letters, syllables, words, phrase, or matter contained in Holy Scripture, have no necessary or natural connexion with Divine revelation or inspiration: and, therefore, by seeing, reading, or understanding them, we cannot infer, that they proceed from God, or be confirmed by Divine authority; as, because creatures involve a necessary relation, connexion, and dependance upon their Creator, philosophers may, by the light of natural reason, demonstrate the existence of one prime cause of all things. In Holy Writ there are innumerable truths not surpassing the sphere of human wit, which are, or may be, delivered by pagan writers, in the self-same words and phrases as they are in Scripture. And as for some truths peculiar to Christians (for example, the mystery of the blessed Trinity, &c.) the only setting them down in writing is not enough to be assured, that such a writing is the undoubted word of God; otherwise some sayings of Plato, Trismegistus, Sibyls, Ovid, &c. must be esteemed canonical Scripture, because they fall upon some truths proper to Christian religion. The internal

light and inspiration, which directed and moved the authors of canonical Scripture, is a hidden quality infused into their understanding and will, and hath no such particular sensible influence into the external writing, that in it we can discover, or from it demonstrate, any such secret light and inspiration; and therefore to be assured, that such a writing is Divine, we cannot know from itself alone, but by some other extrinsical authority.

11. " And here we appeal to any man of judgment, whether it be not a vain brag of some protestants, to tell us—that they wot full well what is Scripture, by the light of Scripture itself, or (as D. Potter words it) 'by* that glorious beam of Divine light, which shines therein;' even as our eye distinguisheth light from darkness, without any other help than light itself; and as our ear knows a voice, by the voice itself alone. But this vanity is refuted by what we said even now, that the external Scripture hath no apparent or necessary connexion with Divine inspiration or revelation. Will D. Potter hold all his brethren for blind men, for not seeing that glorious beam of Divine light which shines in Scripture, about which they cannot agree? corporal light may be discerned by itself alone, as being evident, proportionate, and connatural to our faculty of seeing. The Scripture is Divine, and inspired by God, is a truth exceeding the natural capacity and compass of man's understanding, to us obscure, and to be believed by Divine faith, which, according to the apostle, is, *argumentum* † *non apparentium*; an argument, or conviction of things not evident—and

* Page 141. † Heb. xi. 1.

therefore no wonder if Scripture do not manifest itself by itself alone, but must require some other means for applying it to our understanding. Nevertheless, their own similitudes and instances make against themselves: for, suppose a man had never read, or heard of sun or moon, fire, candle, &c. and should be brought to behold a light, yet in such sort as that the agent or cause efficient from which it proceeded, were kept hidden from him; could such a one, by beholding the light, certainly know, whether it were produced by the sun, or moon, &c. or, if one heard a voice, and had never known the speaker, could he know from whom in particular that voice proceeded? they, who look upon Scripture, may well see that some one wrote it; but that it was written by Divine inspiration, how shall they know? Nay, they cannot so much as know who wrote it, unless they first know the writer, and what hand he writes; as likewise, I cannot know whose voice it is I hear, unless I first both know the person who speaks, and with what voice he useth to speak: and yet even all this supposed, I may perhaps be deceived. For there may be voices so like, and hands counterfeited, that men may be deceived by them, as birds were by the grapes of that skilful painter. Now since protestants affirm, knowledge concerning God as our supernatural end, must be taken from Scripture, they cannot in Scripture alone discern, that it is his voice or writing, because they cannot know from whom a writing or voice proceeds, unless first they know the person who speaketh or writeth: nay, I say more; by Scripture alone they cannot so much as know, that any person doth in it, or by it, speak

any thing at all; because one may write without intent to signify, or affirm any thing, but only to set down, or, as it were, paint such characters, syllables, and words, as men are wont to set copies, not caring what the signification of the words import; or as one transcribes a writing, which himself understands not; or when one writes what another dictates; and in other such cases, wherein it is clear, that the writer speaks or signifies nothing in such his writing: and therefore by it we cannot hear or understand his voice. With what certainty then can any man affirm, that by Scripture itself they can see, that the writers did intend to signify any thing at all; that they were apostles, or other canonical authors; that they wrote their own sense, and not what was dictated by some other man; and, finally and especially, that they wrote by the infallible direction of the Holy Ghost.

12. " But let us be liberal, and for the present suppose [not grant] that Scripture is like to corporal light, by itself alone able to determine, and move our understanding to assent; yet the similitude proves against themselves: for light is not visible, except to such as have eyes, which are not made by the light, but must be presupposed as produced by some other cause. And therefore to hold the similitude, Scripture can be clear only to those who are endued with the eye of faith; or as D. Potter above-cited saith, to all that ' have* eyes to discern the shining beams thereof;' that is, to the believer, as immediately after he speaketh. Faith then must not origin-

* Page 141.

ally proceed from Scripture, but it is to be presupposed, before we can see the light thereof; and consequently there must be some other means precedent to Scripture, to beget faith, which can be no other than the church.

13. "Others affirm, that they know canonical Scriptures to be such, by the title of the books. But how shall we know such inscriptions or titles to be infallibly true? From this their answer our argument is strengthened, because divers apocryphal writings have appeared under the titles and names of sacred authors, as the gospel of Thomas, mentioned by St. Augustine;* the gospel of Peter, which the Nazarenes did use, as Theodoret† witnesseth; with which Seraphion, a catholic bishop, was for some time deceived, as may be read in Eusebius,‡ who also speaketh of the apocalypse of Peter.§ The like may be said of the gospels of Barnabas, Bartholomew, and other such writings specified by Pope Gelasius.‖ Protestants reject likewise some part of Esther and Daniel, which bear the same titles with the rest of those books, as also both we and they hold for apocryphal the third and fourth books which go under the name of Esdras, and yet both of us receive his first and second book: wherefore titles are not sufficient assurances what books be canonical; which D. Covel¶ acknowledgeth in these words: 'It is not the word of God which doth, or possibly can assure us, that we do well to think it is the word of God, the first outward motion leading men so to esteem of the Scripture, is the authority of God's

* Con. Adimantum, c. 11.
† L. ii. Heretic. Fab.
‡ Lib. vi. c. 10.
§ Lib. vi. c. 11.
‖ Dist. Can. Sancta Romana.
¶ In his Defence, art. 4. p. 31.

church, which teacheth us to receive Mark's Gospel, who was not an apostle, and to refuse the gospel of Thomas, who was an apostle; and to retain Luke's Gospel, who saw not Christ, and to reject the gospel of Nicodemus, who saw him.'

14. " Another answer, or rather objection, they are wont to bring — that the Scripture being a principle, needs no proof among Christians. So D. Potter.* But this is either a plain begging of the question, or manifestly untrue, and is directly against their own doctrine and practice. If they mean, that Scripture is one of those principles, which, being the first, and most known in all sciences, cannot be demonstrated by other principles, they suppose that which is in question, whether there be not some principle (for example, the church) whereby we may come to the knowledge of Scripture. If they intend, that Scripture is a principle, but not the first, and most known in Christianity, then Scripture may be proved. For principles, that are not the first, nor known of themselves, may and ought to be proved before we can yield assent either to them, or to other verities depending on them. It is repugnant to their own doctrine and practice, inasmuch as they were wont to affirm, that one part of Scripture may be known to be canonical, and may be interpreted by another. And since every Scripture is a principle sufficient upon which to ground Divine faith, they must grant, that one principle may, and sometimes must, be proved by another. Yea, this their answer, upon due ponderation, falls out to prove what we affirm: for, since all prin-

* Page 234.

ciples cannot be proved, we must (that our labour may not be endless) come at length to rest in some principle, which may not require any other proof: such is tradition, which involves an evidence of fact; and, from hand to hand, and age to age, bringing us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself, cometh to be confirmed by all those miracles and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true. Wherefore the ancient fathers avouch, that we must receive the sacred canon upon the credit of God's church. St. Athanasius* saith, that only four gospels are to be received, because the canons of the holy catholic church have so determined. The third council of Carthage,† having set down the books of Holy Scripture, gives the reason, because, 'We have received from our fathers, that those are to be read in the church.' St. Augustine,‡ speaking of the Acts of the Apostles, saith, 'To which book I must give credit, if I give credit to the gospel, because the catholic church doth alike recommend to me both these books.' And in the same place he hath also these words: 'I would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the catholic church did move me.' A saying so plain, that Zuinglius is forced to cry out, 'Here§ I implore your equity to speak freely, whether the saying of Augustine seems not over bold, or else unadvisedly to have fallen from him.'

15. "But suppose they were assured what books were canonical, this will little avail them,

unless they be likewise certain in what language they remain uncorrupted, or what translations be true. Calvin* acknowledgeth corruption in the Hebrew text; which, if it be taken without points, is so ambiguous, that scarcely any one chapter, yea period, can be securely understood without the help of some translation: if with points, these were, after St. Jerome's time, invented by the perfidious Jews, who either by ignorance might mistake, or upon malice force, the text to favour their impieties. And that the Hebrew text still retains much ambiguity, is apparent by the disagreeing translations of novelists; which also proves the Greek, for the New Testament, not to be void of doubtfulness, as Calvin† confesseth it to be corrupted. And although both the Hebrew and Greek were pure, what doth this help, if only Scripture be the rule of faith, and so very few be able to examine the text in these languages? All then must be reduced to the certainty of translations into other tongues, wherein no private man having any promise or assurance of infallibility, protestants, who rely upon Scripture alone, will find no certain ground for their faith: as accordingly Whitaker‡ affirmeth, 'Those who understand not the Hebrew and Greek, do err often and unavoidably.'

16. "Now concerning the translations of protestants, it will be sufficient to set down what the laborious, exact, and judicious author of the Protestant Apology, &c. dedicated to our late King

* Instit. c. 6. sect. 11.

† Ibid. c. 7. sect. 12.

‡ Lib. de sancta Scriptura, p. 523.

James, of famous memory, hath to this purpose:* 'To omit (saith he) particulars, whose recital would be infinite, and to touch this point but generally only, the translation of the New Testament by Luther is condemned by Andreas Osiander, Kechermannus, and Zuinglius, who saith hereof to Luther—thou dost corrupt the word of God, thou art seen to be a manifest and common corrupter of the Holy Scriptures: how much are we ashamed of thee, who have hitherto esteemed thee beyond all measure, and now prove thee to be such a man? And in like manner doth Luther reject the translation of the Zuinglians, terming them, in matter of divinity, fools, asses, antichrists, deceivers, and of ass-like understanding. Insomuch, that when Froschoverus, the Zuinglian printer of Zurich, sent him a Bible translated by the divines there, Luther would not receive the same; but, sending it back, rejected it, as the protestant writers, Hospinianus and Lavatherus, witness. The translation set forth by Oecolampadius, and the divines of Basil, is reproved by Beza, who affirmeth—that the Basil translation is in many places wicked, and altogether differing from the mind of the Holy Ghost. The translation of Castalio is condemned by Beza, as being sacrilegious, wicked, and ethnical. As concerning Calvin's translation, that learned protestant writer, Carolus Molinæus saith thereof—Calvin in his harmony maketh the text of the gospel to leap up and down; he useth violence to the letter of the gospel; and, beside this, addeth to the text. As

* Tract. 1. sect. 10. subd. 4. joined with tract. 2. c. 2. sect. 10. subd. 3.

touching Beza's translation (to omit the dislike had thereof by Selneccerus, the German protestant of the University of Jena) the aforesaid Molinæus saith of him—*de facto mutat textum*, he actually changeth the text—and giveth farther sundry instances of his corruptions: as also Castalio, that learned Calvinist, and most learned in the tongues, reprehendeth Beza in a whole book of this matter, and saith—that to note all his errors in translation, would require a great volume. And M. Parker saith—As for the Geneva Bibles, it is to be wished, that either they may be purged from those manifold errors, which are both in the text, and in the margent, or else utterly prohibited: all which confirmeth your majesty's grave and learned censure, in your thinking the Geneva translation to be worst of all; and that in the marginal notes annexed to the Geneva translation, some are very partial, untrue, seditious, &c. Lastly, concerning the English translation, the puritans say—Our translation of the Psalms, comprised in our Book of Common Prayer, doth in addition, subtraction, and alteration, differ from the truth of the Hebrew in two hundred places at least: insomuch, as they do therefore profess to rest doubtful, whether a man with a safe conscience may subscribe thereunto. And Mr. Carlisle saith of the English translators, that they have depraved the sense, obscured the truth, and deceived the ignorant; that in many places they do detort the Scriptures from the right sense; and, that they shew themselves to love darkness more than light, falsehood more than truth. And the ministers of Lincoln diocese give their public testimony, terming the English translation—a translation, that taketh away from

the text; that addeth to the text; and that sometime to the changing or obscuring of the meaning of the Holy Ghost. Not without cause, therefore, did your majesty affirm, that you could never see a Bible well translated into English.' Thus far the author of the Protestant Apology, &c. And I cannot forbear to mention, in particular, that famous corruption of Luther, who in the text, where it is said (Rom. iii. 28.) 'We account a man to be justified by faith, without the works of the law,' in favour of justification by faith alone, translateth 'justified by faith alone.' As likewise the falsification of Zuinglius is no less notorious, who, in the gospels of St. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and in St. Paul, in place of, 'This is my body, this is my blood,' translates, 'This signifies my body, this signifies my blood.' And here let protestants consider duly of these points: salvation cannot be hoped for without true faith: faith, according to them, relies upon Scripture alone: Scripture must be delivered to most of them, by the translations: translations depend on the skill and honesty of men, in whom nothing is more certain than a most certain possibility to err; and no greater evidence of truth, than that it is evident some of them embrace falsehood, by reason of their contrary translations. What then remaineth, but that truth, faith, salvation, and all must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground? How many poor souls are lamentably seduced, while from preaching ministers they admire a multitude of texts of Divine Scripture, but are indeed the false translations and corruptions of erring men? Let them, therefore, if they will be assured of true Scriptures, fly to the always visible catholic

church, against which the gates of hell can never so far prevail, as that she shall be permitted to deceive the Christian world with false Scriptures. And Luther himself, by unfortunate experience, was at length forced to confess thus much, saying, 'If the world* last longer, it will be again necessary to receive the decrees of councils, and to have recourse to them, by reason of divers interpretations of Scripture which now reign.' On the contrary side, the translation approved by the Roman church, is commended even by our adversaries; and D. Covel in particular saith—that it was used in the church one thousand† three hundred years ago, and doubteth not to prefer that‡ translation before others. Insomuch, that whereas the English translations be many, and among themselves disagreeing, he concludeth, that of all those the approved translation, authorized by the church of England, is that which cometh nearest to the vulgar, and is commonly called the Bishop's Bible. So that the truth of that translation, which we use, must be the rule to judge of the goodness of their Bibles: and therefore they are obliged to maintain our translations, if it were but for their own sake.

17. "But doth indeed the source of their manifold uncertainties stop here? No, the chiefest difficulty remains, concerning the true meaning of Scripture; for attaining whereof, if protestants had any certainty, they could not disagree so hugely as they do. Hence Mr. Hooker saith, 'We

* Lib. con. Zuing. de verit. corp. Christ. in Eucha.

† In his Answer unto M. John Burges, page 94.

‡ Ibid.

are* right sure of this, that nature, Scripture, and experience, have all taught the world to seek for the ending contentions, by submitting itself unto some judicial and definitive sentence, whereunto neither part that contendeth may, under any pretence, refuse to stand.' Doctor Field's words are remarkable to this purpose: 'Seeing (saith he) the controversies† of religion in our times are grown in number so many, and in nature so intricate, that few have time and leisure, fewer strength of understanding, to examine them; what remaineth for men desirous of satisfaction in things of such consequence, but diligently to search out, which among all the societies in the world, is that blessed company of holy ones, that household of faith, that spouse of Christ, and church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of truth, that so they may embrace her communion, follow her directions, and rest in her judgment?'

18. "And now, that the true interpretation of Scripture ought to be received from the church, it is also proved by what we have already demonstrated, that she it is, who must declare what books be true Scripture; wherein, if she be assisted by the Holy Ghost, why should we not believe her to be infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of them? Let protestants, therefore, either bring some proof out of Scripture, that the church is guided by the Holy Ghost in discerning true Scripture, and not in delivering the true sense thereof: or else give us leave to apply

* In his Preface to his Books of Eccl. Policy, sect. 6. p. 26.

† In his Treatise of the Church, in his Epistle Dedicatory to the L. Archbishop.

against them the argument which St. Augustine opposed to his Manicheans in these words: 'I would not believe* the gospel, unless the authority of the church did move me. Them, therefore, whom I obeyed, saying, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey, saying to me, Do not believe Manicheus (Luther, Calvin, &c.) choose what thou pleasest. If thou shalt say, Believe the catholics; they warn me not to give any credit to you. If therefore I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If you say, Do not believe the catholics, thou shalt not do well in forcing me to the faith of Manicheus, because, by the preaching of catholics, I believed the gospel itself. If you say, You did well to believe them [catholics] commending the gospel, but you did not well to believe them, discommending Manicheus; dost thou think me so very foolish, that without any reason at all, I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?' And do not protestants perfectly resemble these men, to whom St. Augustine spake, when they will have men to believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning Luther, and the rest? Against whom, when they first opposed themselves to the Roman church, St. Augustine may have seemed to have spoken no less prophetically than doctrinally, when he said, 'Why should I not most† diligently inquire what Christ commanded of them before all others, by whose authority I was moved to believe, that Christ commanded any good thing: canst thou better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have

been, or to be, if the belief thereof had been recommended by thee to me? This therefore I believed by fame, strengthened with celebrity, consent, antiquity. But every one may see that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing deserving authority. What madness is this? Believe them [catholics] that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us, what Christ said. Why, I beseech thee? Surely, if they [catholics] were not at all, and could not teach me any thing, I would more easily persuade myself, that I were not to believe Christ, than that I should learn any thing concerning him from any other than them by whom I believed him.' If therefore we receive the knowledge of Christ and Scriptures from the church, from her also we take his doctrine, and the interpretation thereof.

19. "But, besides all this, the Scripture cannot be judge of controversies; who ought to be such, as that to him not only the learned or veterans, but also the unlearned and novices, may have recourse: for these being capable of salvation, and endued with faith of the same nature with that of the learned, there must be some universal judge, which the ignorant may understand, and to whom the greatest clerks must submit. Such is the church; and the Scripture is not such.

20. "Now, the inconveniences which follow by referring all controversies to Scripture alone, are very clear: for by this principle, all is finally in very deed and truth reduced to the internal private spirit, because there is really no middle way betwixt a public external, and a private internal voice; and whosoever refuseth the one, must of

21. "This tenet also of protestants, by taking the office of judicature, from the church, comes to confer it upon every particular man, who, being driven from submission to the church, cannot be blamed if he trust himself as far as any other, his conscience dictating, that wittingly he means not to cozen himself, as others maliciously may do: which inference is so manifest, that it hath extorted from divers protestants the open confession of so vast an absurdity. Hear Luther: 'The governors of *churches, and pastors of Christ's sheep, have indeed power to teach, but the sheep ought to give judgment, whether they propound the voice of Christ, or of aliens.' Lubbertus saith, 'As we have †demonstrated, that all public judges may be deceived in interpreting; so we affirm, that they may err in judging. All faithful men are private judges, and they also have power to judge of doctrines and interpretations.' Whitaker, even of the unlearned, saith, 'They ‡ought to have recourse unto the more learned; but in the mean time we must be careful not to attribute to them over much, but so that still we retain our own freedom.' Bilson also affirmeth, that 'the people §must be discerners and judges of that which is taught.' This same pernicious doctrine is delivered by Brentius, Zanchius, Cartwright, and others exactly cited by ‖Breerely; and nothing is more common in every protestant's mouth, than that he admits of fathers, councils, church, &c. as far as

* Tom. 2. Wittem. fol. 375.
† In lib. de Principiis Christian. Dogm. l. 6. c. 3.
‡ De Sacra Scriptura, 529.
§ In his true Difference, part 2.
‖ Tract. 2. cap. 1. sect. 1.

they agree with Scripture; which upon the matter is himself. Thus heresy ever falls upon extremes: it pretends to have Scripture alone for judge of controversies; and in the mean time sets up as many judges as there are men and women in the Christian world. What good statesmen would they be, who should ideate or fancy such a commonwealth, as these men have framed to themselves a church? They verify what St. Augustine objecteth against certain heretics: 'You see* that you go about to overthrow all authority of Scripture, and that every man's mind may be to himself a rule, what he is to allow, or disallow, in every Scripture.'

22. "Moreover, what confusion to the church, what danger to the commonwealth, this denial of the authority of the church may bring, I leave to the consideration of any judicious, indifferent man. I will only set down some words of D. Potter, who, speaking of the proposition of revealed truths, sufficient to prove him that gainsayeth them to be an heretic, saith thus: 'This proposition† of revealed truths, is not by infallible determination of pope or church; (pope and church being excluded, let us hear what more secure rule he will prescribe) but by whatsoever means a man may be convinced in conscience of Divine revelation. If a preacher do clear any point of faith to his hearers; if a private Christian do make it appear to his neighbour, that any conclusion, or point of faith is delivered by Divine revelation of God's word; if a man himself (without any teacher) by reading of the Scriptures, or hear-

ing them read, be convinced of the truth of any such conclusion; this is a sufficient proposition to prove him that gainsayeth any such proof, to be an heretic, an obstinate opposer of the faith.' Behold, what goodly safe propounders of faith arise in place of God's universal visible church, which must yield to a single preacher, a neighbour, a man himself if he can read, or at least have ears to hear Scripture read! Verily I do not see, but that every well-governed civil commonwealth ought to concur towards the exterminating of this doctrine, whereby the interpretation of Scripture is taken from the church and conferred upon every man, who, whatsoever is pretended to the contrary, may be a passionate seditious creature.

23. "Moreover, there was no Scripture or written word for about two thousand years from Adam to Moses, whom all acknowledge to have been the first author of canonical Scripture: and again, for about two thousand years more, from Moses to Christ our Lord, Holy Scripture was only among the people of Israel; and yet there were gentiles endued in those days with Divine faith, as appeareth in Job, and his friends. Wherefore, during so many ages, the church alone was the decider of controversies, and instructor of the faithful. Neither did the word written by Moses deprive that church of her former infallibility, or other qualities requisite for a judge: yea, D. Potter acknowledgeth, that besides the law, there was a living judge in the Jewish church, endued with an absolutely infallible direction in cases of moment; as all points belonging to Divine faith are. Now the church of Christ our Lord was before the Scriptures of the New Testament, which were not

written instantly, nor all at one time, but successively upon several occasions; and some after the decease of most of the apostles; and, after they were written, they were not presently known to all churches: and of some there was doubt in the church for some ages after our Saviour. Shall we then say, that according as the church by little and little received Holy Scripture, she was by the like degrees divested of her possessed infallibility and power to decide controversies in religion? that some churches had one judge of controversies, and others another? That with months, or years, as new canonical Scripture grew to be published, the church altered her whole rule of faith, or judge of controversies? after the apostles' time, and after the writing of Scriptures, heresies would be sure to rise, requiring in God's church, for their discovery and condemnation, infallibility, either to write new canonical Scripture, as was done in the apostles' time by occasion of emergent heresies; or infallibility to interpret Scriptures already written, or without Scripture, by Divine unwritten traditions, and assistance of the Holy Ghost to determine all controversies; as Tertullian saith, 'The soul* is before the letter; and speech before books; and sense before style.' Certainly such addition of Scripture, with derogation, or subtraction from the former power and infallibility of the church, would have brought to the world division in matters of faith, and the church had rather lost than gained by Holy Scripture (which ought to be far from our tongues and thoughts); it being manifest, that for decision of controver-

sies, infallibility settled in a living judge, is incomparably more useful and fit, than if it were conceived as inherent in some inanimate writing. Is there such repugnance betwixt infallibility in the church, and existence of Scripture, that the production of the one must be the destruction of the other? Must the church wax dry, by giving to her children the milk of Sacred Writ? No, no: her infallibility was, and is, derived from an inexhausted fountain. If protestants will have the Scripture alone for their judge, let them first produce some Scripture affirming, that by the entering thereof, infallibility went out of the church. D. Potter may remember what himself teacheth; that the church is still endued with infallibility in points fundamental; and, consequently, that infallibility in the church doth well agree with the truth, the sanctity, yea, with the sufficiency of Scripture, for all matters necessary to salvation. I would therefore gladly know, out of what text he imagineth, that the church, by the coming of Scripture, was deprived of infallibility in some points, and not in others? He affirmeth, that the Jewish synagogue retained infallibility in herself, notwithstanding the writing of the Old Testament: and will he so unworthily and unjustly deprive the church of Christ of infallibility by reason of the New Testament? Especially, if we consider, that in the Old Testament, laws, ceremonies, rites, punishments, judgments, sacraments, sacrifices, &c. were more particularly and minutely delivered to the Jews, than in the New Testament is done; our Saviour leaving the determination or declaration of particulars to his spouse the church, which therefore stands in need of infallibility more than

the Jewish synagogue. D. Potter* against this argument, drawn from the power and infallibility of the synagogue, objects, that we might as well infer, that Christians must have one sovereign prince over all, because the Jews had one chief judge. But the disparity is very clear: the synagogue was a type and figure of the church of Christ; not so their civil government of Christian commonwealths or kingdoms: the church succeeded to the synagogue, but not Christian princes to Jewish magistrates: and the church is compared to a house, or a family;† to an army,‡ to a body,§ to a kingdom,‖ &c. all which require one master, one general, one head, one magistrate, one spiritual king; as our blessed Saviour with *fiet unum ovile*, joined ¶*unus pastor;* one sheepfold, one pastor: but all distinct kingdoms, or commonwealths, are not one army, family, &c. and, finally, it is necessary to salvation, that all have recourse to one church; but for temporal weal, there is no need that all submit or depend upon one temporal prince, kingdom, or commonwealth: and therefore our Saviour hath left to his whole church, as being one, one law, one Scripture, the same sacraments, &c. Whereas kingdoms have their several laws, different governments, diversity of powers, magistracy, &c. And so this objection returneth upon D. Potter. For as in the one community of the Jews, there was one power and judge, to end debates, and resolve difficulties; so in the church of Christ, which is

* Page 24.
† Heb. xiii.
‡ Cant. ii.
§ 1 Cor. x. Ephes. iv.

one, there must be some one authority to decide all controversies in religion.

24. "This discourse is excellently proved by ancient St. Irenæus* in these words: 'What if the apostles had not left Scriptures, ought we not to have followed the order of tradition, which they delivered to those to whom they committed the churches? To which order many nations yield assent, who believe in Christ, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit of God, without letters or ink, and diligently keeping ancient tradition. It is easy to receive the truth from God's church, seeing the apostles have most fully deposited in her, as in a rich storehouse, all things belonging to truth. For what? If there should arise any contention of some small question, ought we not to have recourse to the most ancient churches, and from them to receive what is certain and clear concerning the present question.'

25. "Besides all this, the doctrine of protestants is destructive of itself: for either they have certain and infallible means, not to err in interpreting Scripture, or they have not: if not, then the Scripture (to them) cannot be a sufficient ground for infallible faith, nor a mere judge in controversies. If they have certain infallible means, and so cannot err in their interpretations of Scriptures, then they are able with infallibility to hear, examine, and determine all controversies of faith; and so they may be, and are, judges of controversies, although they use the Scriptures as a rule. And thus, against their own doctrine,

* Lib. v. c. 4.

they constitute another judge of controversies, beside Scripture alone.

26. "Lastly, I ask D. Potter, whether this assertion—Scripture alone is judge of all controversies in faith—be a fundamental point of faith, or no? He must be well advised, before he say, that it is a fundamental point: for he will have against him as many protestants as teach, that by Scripture alone it is impossible to know what books be Scripture; which yet, to protestants, is the most necessary and chief point of all other. D. Covel expressly saith, 'Doubtless* it is a tolerable opinion in the church of Rome, if they go no further, as some of them do not (he should have said, as none of them do) to affirm, that the Scriptures are holy and Divine in themselves, but so esteemed by us, for the authority of the church.' He will likewise oppose himself to those his brethren, who grant, that controversies cannot be ended without some external living authority, as we noted before. Besides, how can it be in us a fundamental error to say, the Scripture alone is not judge of controversies, seeing (notwithstanding this our belief) we use for interpreting of Scripture, all the means which they prescribe; as prayer, conferring of places, consulting the originals, &c. and to these add the instruction and authority of God's church, which even by his confession cannot err damnably, and may afford us more help than can be expected from the industry, learning, or wit of any private person: and, finally, D. Potter grants, that the church of Rome doth not maintain any fundamental error against

faith; and consequently, he cannot affirm, th
our doctrine, in this present controversy,
damnable. If he answer, that their tenet, abo
the Scriptures being the only judge of controve
sies, is not a fundamental point of faith; then,
he teacheth, that the universal church may err
points not fundamental; so, I hope, he will n
deny, but particular churches, and private me
are much more obnoxious to error in such point
and in particular in this, that Scripture alone
judge of controversies: and so, the very princip
upon which their whole faith is grounded, remai
to them uncertain. And, on the other side, f
the self-same reason, they are not certain, b
that the church is judge of controversies; whic
if she be, then their case is lamentable, who
general deny her this authority, and in particul
controversies oppose her definitions. Beside
among public conclusions defended in Oxford
the year 1633, to the questions, 'Whether th
church have authority to determine controversi
in faith;' and, 'to interpret Holy Scripture
the answer to both is affirmative.

27. "Since, then, the visible church of Chri
our Lord, is that infallible means, whereby the r
vealed truths of Almighty God are conveyed
our understanding; it followeth, that to oppo
her definitions is to resist God himself; whic
blessed St. Augustine plainly affirmeth, whe
speaking of the controversy about re-baptizatio
of such as were baptized by heretics, he saith
'This* is neither openly nor evidently read, n
ther by you nor by me; yet if there were any wi

* De Unit. Eccles. c. 22.

man, of whom our Saviour had given testimony, and that he should be consulted in this question, we should make no doubt to perform what he should say, lest we might seem to gainsay not him so much as Christ, by whose testimony he was recommended. Now Christ beareth witness to his church.' And, a little after, 'Whosoever refuseth to follow the practice of the church, doth resist our Saviour himself, who by his testimony recommends the church.' I conclude therefore with this argument: whosoever resisteth that means which infallibly proposeth to us God's word or revelation, commits a sin, which, unrepented, excludes salvation: but whosoever resisteth Christ's visible church, doth resist that means which infallibly proposeth to us God's word or revelation: therefore whosoever resisteth Christ's visible church, commits a sin, which, unrepented, excludes salvation. Now, what visible church was extant, when Luther began his pretended reformation, whether it were the Roman or protestant church; and whether he, and other protestants, do not oppose that visible church, which was spread over the world, before, and in, Luther's time, is easy to be determined, and importeth every one most seriously to ponder, as a thing whereon eternal salvation dependeth. And because our adversaries do here most insist upon the distinction of points fundamental, and not fundamental; and in particular teach, that the church may err in points not fundamental; it will be necessary to examine the truth and weight of this evasion, which shall be done in the next chapter."

ANSWER TO THE SECOND CHAPTER:

Concerning the means whereby the revealed truths of God are conveyed to our understanding; and which must determine controversies in faith and religion.

AD. §. 1. He that would usurp an absolute lordship and tyranny over any people, need not put himself to the trouble and difficulty of abrogating and disannulling the laws, made to maintain the common liberty; for he may frustrate their intent, compass his own design as well, if he can get the power and authority to interpret them as he pleases, and add to them what he pleases, and to have his interpretations and additions stand for laws; if he can rule his people by his laws, and his laws by his lawyers. So the church of Rome, to establish her tyranny over men's consciences, needed not either to abolish or corrupt the Holy Scriptures, the pillars and supporters of Christian liberty; (which in regard of the numerous multitudes of copies dispersed through all places, translated into almost all languages, guarded with all solicitous care and industry, had been an impossible attempt:) but the more expedite way, and therefore more likely to be successful, was to gain the opinion and esteem of the public and authorized interpreter of them, and the authority of adding to them what doctrine she pleased, under

the title of traditions or definitions. For by this means, she might both serve herself of all those clauses of Scripture, which might be drawn to cast a favourable countenance upon her ambitious pretences, which in case the Scripture had been abolished she could not have done; and yet be secure enough of having either her power limited, or her corruptions and abuses reformed by them; this being once settled in the minds of men, that unwritten doctrines, if proposed by her, were to be received with equal reverence to those that were written; and that the sense of Scripture was not that which seemed to men's reason and understanding to be so, but that which the church of Rome should declare to be so, seemed it never so unreasonable and incongruous. The matter being once thus ordered, and the Holy Scriptures being made in effect not your directors and judges (no farther than you please) but your servants and instruments, always pressed and in readiness to advance your designs, and disabled wholly with minds so qualified to prejudice or impeach them; it is safe for you to put a crown on their head, and a reed in their hands, and to bow before them, and cry, "Hail King of the Jews!" to pretend a great deal of esteem, and respect, and reverence to them, as here you do. But to little purpose is verbal reverence without entire submission and sincere obedience; and, as our Saviour said of some, so the Scripture, could it speak, I believe would say to you, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not that which I command you?" Cast away the vain and arrogant pretence of infallibility, which makes your errors incurable. Leave picturing God, and worshipping him by pictures. "Teach

not for doctrine the commandments of men." Debar not the laity of the testament of Christ's blood. Let your public prayers and psalms, and hymns, be in such language as is for the edification of the assistants. Take not from the clergy that liberty of marriage which Christ hath left them. Do not impose upon men that humility of worshipping angels which St. Paul condemns. Teach no more proper sacrifices of Christ but one. Acknowledge them that die in Christ to be blessed, and to " rest from their labours." Acknowledge the sacrament, after consecration, to be bread and wine, as well as Christ's body and blood. Acknowledge the gift of continency, without marriage, not to be given to all. Let not the weapons of your warfare be carnal, such as are massacres, treasons, persecutions, and, in a word, all means either violent or fraudulent: these and other things which the Scripture commands you, do, and then we shall willingly give you such testimony as you deserve ; but, till you do so, to talk of estimation, respect, and reverence to the Scripture, is nothing else but talk.

2. For neither is that true which you pretend —that we possess the Scripture from you, or take it upon the integrity of your custody ;—but upon universal tradition, of which you are but a little part. Neither, if it were true that protestants acknowledged the integrity of it to have been guarded by your alone custody, were this any argument of your reverence towards them. For, first, you might preserve them entire, not for want of will, but of power, to corrupt them, as it is a hard thing to poison the sea. And then, having prevailed so far with men, as either not to look at

l into them, or but only through such spectacles s you should please to make for them, and to see nothing in them, though as clear as the sun, if it any way made against you; you might keep them entire, without any thought or care to conform your doctrine to them, or reform it by them (which were indeed to reverence the Scriptures); but, out of a persuasion, that you could qualify them well enough with your glosses and interpretations, and make them sufficiently conformable to your present doctrine, at least in their judgment, who were prepossessed with this persuasion—that your church was to judge of the sense of Scripture, not be to judged by it.

3. For, whereas you say—no cause imaginable could avert your will, from giving the function of supreme and sole judge to Holy Writ; but that the thing is impossible, and that by this means controversies are increased and not ended;—you mean perhaps, that you can or will imagine no other cause but these. But sure there is little reason you should measure other men's imaginations by your own, who perhaps may be so clouded and veiled with prejudice, that you cannot, or will not, see that which is most manifest. For what indifferent and unprejudicate man may not easily conceive another cause which (I do not say does, but certainly) may pervert your wills, and avert your understandings from submitting your religion and church to a trial by Scripture? I mean the great, and apparent, and unavoidable danger, which by this means you would fall into, of losing the opinion which men have of your infallibility, and consequently your power and authority over men's consciences, and all that depends upon it. So

that though Diana of the Ephesians be cried up, yet it may be feared that with a great many among you (though I censure or judge no man) the other cause which wrought upon Demetrius and the craftsmen, may have with you also the more effectual, though more secret, influence; and that is, that by this craft we have our living; by this craft, I mean, of keeping your proselytes from an indifferent trial of your religion by Scripture, and making them yield up and captivate their judgment unto yours. Yet had you only said *de facto*, that no other cause did avert your own will from this, but only these which you pretend out of charity, I should have believed you. But seeing you speak not of yourself, but of all of your side, whose hearts you cannot know; and profess not only, that there is no other cause, but that no other is imaginable, I could not let this pass without a censure. As for the impossibility of Scriptures being the sole judge of controversies, that is the sole rule for men to judge them by (for we mean nothing else) you only affirm it without proof, as if the thing were evident of itself; and therefore I, conceiving the contrary to be more evident, might well content myself to deny it without refutation: yet I cannot but desire you to tell me, if Scripture cannot be the judge of any controversy, how shall that touching the church and the notes of it be determined? And if it be the sole judge of this one, why may it not of others? Why not of all? those only excepted, wherein the Scripture itself is the subject of the question, which cannot be determined but by natural reason, the only principle, beside Scripture, which is common to Christians.

4. Then for the imputation of increasing contentions, and not ending them, Scripture is innocent of it; as also this opinion—that controversies are to be decided by Scripture.—For if men did really and sincerely submit their judgments to Scripture, and that only, and would require no more of any man but to do so, it were impossible but that all controversies touching things necessary and very profitable should be ended; and if others were continued or increased, it were no matter.

5. In the next words we have direct boys play, a thing given with one hand, and taken away with the other; an acknowledgment made in one line, and retracted in the next.—We acknowledge (say you) Scripture to be a perfect rule, forasmuch as a writing can be a rule; only we deny that it excludes unwritten tradition.—As if you should have said, we acknowledge it to be as perfect a rule as writing can be; only we deny it to be as perfect a rule as a writing may be. Either therefore you must revoke your acknowledgment, or retract your retraction of it; for both cannot possibly stand together. For if you will stand to what you have granted, that Scripture is as perfect a rule of faith as a writing can be; you must then grant it both so complete, that it needs no addition, and so evident, that it needs no interpretation: for both these properties are requisite to a perfect rule, and a writing is capable of both these properties.

6. That both these properties are requisite to a perfect rule, it is apparent; because that is not perfect in any kind which wants some parts belonging to its integrity; as, he is not a perfect man that wants any part appertaining to the integrity of a man; and therefore that which wants any ac-

cession to make it a perfect rule, of itself is not a perfect rule. And then, the end of a rule is to regulate and direct. Now every instrument is more or less perfect in its kind, as it is more or less fit to attain the end for which it is ordained: but nothing obscure or unevident, while it is so, is fit to regulate and direct them to whom it is so: therefore, it is requisite also to a rule (so far as it is a rule) to be evident; otherwise indeed it is no rule, because it cannot serve for direction. I conclude, therefore, that both these properties are required to a perfect rule: both to be so complete as to need no addition; and to be so evident as to need no interpretation.

7. Now that a writing is capable of both these perfections, it is so plain, that I am even ashamed to prove it. For he that denies it, must say, that something may be spoken which cannot be written. For if such a complete and evident rule of faith may be delivered by word of mouth, as you pretend it may, and is; and whatsoever is delivered by word of mouth, may also be written; then such a complete and evident rule of faith may also be written. If you will have more light added to the sun, answer me then to these questions: Whether your church can set down in writing all these, which she pretends to be Divine unwritten traditions, and add them to the verities already written? And, whether she can set us down such interpretations of all obscurities in the faith as shall need no farther interpretations? If she cannot, then she hath not that power, which you pretend she hath, of being an infallible teacher of all Divine verities and an infallible interpreter of obscurities in the faith: for she cannot teach us all Divine

verities, if she cannot write them down; neither is that an interpretation which needs again to be interpreted. If she can, let her do it, and then we shall have a writing, not only capable of, but actually endowed with, both these perfections, of being both so complete as to need no addition, and so evident as to need no interpretation. Lastly, whatsoever your church can do or not do, no man can, without blasphemy, deny that Christ Jesus, if he had pleased, could have writ us a rule of faith so plain and perfect, as that it should have wanted neither any part to make up its integrity, nor any clearness to make it sufficiently intelligible. And if Christ could have done this, then the thing might have been done; a writing there might have been, endowed with both these properties. Thus therefore I conclude; a writing may be so perfect a rule, as to need neither addition nor interpretation: but the Scripture you acknowledge a perfect rule, forasmuch as a writing can be a rule, therefore it needs neither addition nor interpretation.

8. You will say, that though a writing be never so perfect a rule of faith, yet it must be beholden to tradition to give it this testimony, that it is a rule of faith, and the word of God.—I answer, first, there is no absolute necessity of this, for God might, if he thought good, give it the attestation of perpetual miracles. Secondly, that it is one thing to be a perfect rule of faith, another, to be proved so unto us. And thus though a writing could not be proved to us to be a perfect rule of faith, by its own saying so, for nothing is proved true by being said or written in a book, but only by tradition, which is a thing credible of itself: yet it may be so in itself, and contain all the material objects,

all the particular articles of our faith, without any dependance upon tradition; even this also not excepted, that this writing doth contain the rule of faith. Now when protestants affirm against papists, that Scripture is a perfect rule of faith, their meaning is not, that by Scripture all things absolutely may be proved, which are to be believed: for it can never be proved by Scripture to a gainsayer, that there is a God, or that the book called Scripture is the word of God; for he that will deny these assertions when they are spoken, will believe them never a whit the more, because you can shew them written: but their meaning is, that the Scripture, to them which presuppose it Divine, and a rule of faith, as papists and protestants do, contains all the material objects of faith, is a complete and total, and not only an imperfect and a partial rule.

9. But every book and chapter, and text of Scripture is infallible, and wants no due perfection, and yet excludes not the addition of other books of Scripture: therefore the perfection of the whole Scripture excludes not the addition of unwritten tradition.—I answer: every text of Scripture, though it hath the prefection belonging to a text of Scripture, yet it hath not the perfection requisite to a perfect rule of faith; and that only is the perfection which is the subject of our discourse. So that this is to abuse your reader with the ambiguity of the word perfect. In effect, as if you should say, a text of Scripture may be a perfect text, though there be others beside it; therefore the whole Scripture may be a perfect rule of faith, though there be other parts of this rule, besides the Scripture, and though the Scrip-

10. The next argument to the same purpose is, for sophistry, cousin-german to the former.—When the first books of Scripture were written, they did not exclude unwritten traditions: therefore now also, that all the books of Scripture are written, traditions are not excluded.—The sense of which argument (if it have any) must be this: when only a part of the Scripture was written, then a part of the Divine doctrine was unwritten; therefore now, when all the Scripture is written, yet some part of the Divine doctrine is yet unwritten. If you say, your conclusion is not that it is so, but without disparagement to Scripture may be so; without disparagement to the truth of Scripture, I grant it; but without disparagement to the Scripture's being a perfect rule, I deny it. And now the question is not of the truth, but the perfection of it, which are very different things, though you would fain confound them. For Scripture might very well be all true, though it contain not all necessary Divine truth. But unless it do so, it cannot be a perfect rule of faith: for that which wants any thing is not perfect. For, I hope you do not imagine, that we conceive any antipathy between God's word written and unwritten, but that both might very well stand together. All that we say is this—that we have reason to believe that God, *de facto*, hath ordered the matter so, that all the gospel of Christ, the whole covenant between God and man, is now written. Whereas if he had pleased, he might have so disposed it, that part might have been written, and part unwritten; but then he would have taken order, to whom we should have had recourse for that part of it which was not written; which seeing he hath

not done (as the progress shall demonstrate) it is evident he hath left no part of it unwritten. We know no man therefore that says, it were any injury to the written word to be joined with the unwritten, if there were any wherewith it might be joined; but that we deny. The infidelity of a keeper may very well consist with the authority of the thing committed to his custody. But we know no one society of Christians that is such a faithful keeper as you pretend. The Scripture itself was not kept so faithfully by you, but that you suffered infinite variety of readings to creep into it; all which could not possibly be Divine, and yet, in several parts of your church, all of them, until the last age, were so esteemed. The interpretations of obscure places of Scripture, which without question the apostles taught the primitive Christians, are wholly lost; there remains no certainty scarce of any one. Those worlds of miracles which our Saviour did, which were not written, for want of writing are vanished out of the memory of men: and many profitable things which the apostles taught and writ not, as that which St. Paul glanceth at in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians of the cause of the hindrance of the coming of antichrist, are wholly lost and extinguished; so unfaithful or negligent hath been this keeper of Divine verities, whose eyes, like the Keeper's of Israel (you say) have never slumbered nor slept. Lastly, we deny not but a judge and a law might well stand together, but we deny that there is any such judge of God's appointment. Had he intended any such judge, he would have named him, lest otherwise (as now it is) our judge of controversies should be our greatest controversy.

11. Ad. §. 2—6. In your second paragraph, you sum up those arguments wherewith you intend to prove that Scripture alone cannot be judge in controversies: wherein I profess unto you beforehand, that you will fight without an adversary. For though protestants, being warranted by some of the fathers, have called Scripture the judge of controversy; and you, in saying, here, that Scripture alone cannot be judge, imply that it may be called in some sense a judge, though not alone: yet to speak properly (as men should speak when they write of controversies in religion) the Scripture is not a judge of controversies, but a rule only, and the only rule for Christians to judge them by. Every man is to judge for himself with the judgment of discretion, and to choose either his religion first, and then his church, as we say; or, as you, his church first, and then his religion. But, by the consent of both sides, every man is to judge and choose; and the rule whereby he is to guide his choice, if he be a natural man, is reason; if he be already a Christian, Scripture; which we say is the rule to judge controversies by. Yet not all simply, but all the controversies of Christians, of those that are already agreed upon this first principle, that the Scripture is the word of God. But that there is any man, or any company of men, appointed to be judge for all men, that we deny; and that I believe you will never prove. The very truth is, we say no more in this matter, than evidence of truth hath made you confess in plain terms in the beginning of this chapter; viz.—that Scripture is a perfect rule of faith forasmuch as a writing can be a rule.—So that all your reasons, whereby you labour to dethrone the Scripture

from this office of judging, we might let pass as impertinent to the conclusion which we maintain, and you have already granted; yet out of courtesy we will consider them.

12. Your first is this:—A judge must be a person fit to end controversies; but the Scripture is not a person, nor fit to end controversies, no more than the law would be without the judges; therefore, though it may be a rule, it cannot be a judge. —Which conclusion I have already granted: only my request is, that you will permit Scripture to have the properties of a rule, that is, to be fit to direct every one that will make the best use of it, to that end for which it was ordained; and that is as much as we need desire. For, as if I were to go a journey, and had a guide which could not err, I needed not to know my way; so, on the other side, if I know my way, or have a plain rule to know it by, I shall need no guide. Grant therefore Scripture to be such a rule, and it will quickly take away all necessity of having an infallible guide. But—without a living judge it will be no fitter (you say) to end controversies, than the law alone to end suits.—I answer, if the law were plain and perfect, and men honest and desirous to understand aright, and obey it, he that says it were not fit to end controversies, must either want understanding himself, or think the world wants it. Now the Scripture, we pretend, in things necessary is plain and perfect; and men, we say, are obliged, under pain of damnation, to seek the true sense of it, and not to wrest it to their preconceived fancies. Such a law therefore to such men, cannot but be very fit to end all controversies necessary to be ended. For others that

are not so, they will end when the world ends, and that is time enough.

13. Your next encounter is with them, who acknowledging the Scripture a rule only, and not a judge, make the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, the judge of controversies. Which you disprove, by saying, that the Holy Ghost, speaking only in Scripture, is no more intelligible to us than the Scripture in which he speaks. But by this reason, neither the pope, nor a council, can be a judge neither. For first, denying the Scriptures, the writings of the Holy Ghost, to be judges, you will not, I hope, offer to pretend, that their decrees, the writings of men, are more capable of this function; the same exceptions, at least, if not more, and greater lying against them as do against Scripture. And then what you object against the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, to exclude him from this office, the same I return upon them and their decrees, to debar them from it; that they speaking unto us only in their decrees, are no more intelligible than the decrees in which they speak. And, therefore, if the Holy Ghost, speaking in Scripture, may not be a judge for this reason; neither may they, speaking in their decrees, be judges for the same reason. If the pope's decrees (you will say) be obscure, he can explain himself; and so the Scripture cannot. But the Holy Ghost, that speaks in Scripture, can do so, if he please; and, when he is pleased, will do so. In the mean time, it will be fit for you to wait his leisure, and to be content, that those things of Scripture which are plain should be so, and those which are obscure should remain obscure, until he please to declare them. Besides,

he can (which you cannot warrant me of the pope or a council) speak at first so plainly, that his words shall need no farther explanation; and so in things necessary we believe he hath done. And if you say, the decrees of councils, touching controversies, though they be not the judge, yet they are the judge's sentence: so I say the Scripture, though not the judge, is the sentence of the judge. When therefore you conclude, that to say a judge is necessary for deciding controversies about the meaning of Scripture, is as much as to say, he is necessary to decide what the Holy Ghost speaks in Scripture: this I grant is true; but I may not grant that a judge (such an one as we dispute of) is necessary, either to do the one or the other. For if the Scripture (as it is in things necessary) be plain, why should it be more necessary to have a judge to interpret it in plain places, than to have a judge to interpret the meaning of a council's decrees, and others to interpret their interpretations, and others to interpret theirs, and so on for ever? And where they are not plain, there if we, using diligence to find the truth, do yet miss of it and fall into error, there is no danger in it. They that err, and they that do not err, may both be saved. So that those places, which contain things necessary, and wherein errors were dangerous, need no infallible interpreter, because they are plain; and those that are obscure need none, because they contain not things necessary, neither is error in them dangerous.

13. The law-maker speaking in the law, I grant it, is no more easily understood than the law itself, for his speech is nothing else but the law: I grant it very necessary, that besides the law-maker

speaking in the law, there should be other judges to determine civil and criminal controversies, and to give every man that justice which the law allows him. But your argument drawn from hence, to shew a necessity of a visible judge in controversies of religion, I say is sophistical; and that for many reasons.

14. First, Because the variety of civil cases is infinite, and therefore there cannot be possibly laws enough provided for the determination of them; and therefore there must be a judge to supply, out of the principles of reason, the interpretation of the law, where it is defective. But the Scripture (we say) is a perfect rule of faith, and therefore needs no supply of the defects of it.

15. Secondly, To execute the letter of the law, according to rigour, would be many times unjust, and therefore there is need of a judge to moderate

necessary points of religion are plain and easy, and consequently every man in this cause to be a competent judge for himself; because it concerns himself to judge right as much as eternal happiness is worth. And if through his own default he judge amiss, he alone shall suffer for it.

17. Fourthly, In civil controversies we are obliged only to external passive obedience, and not to an internal and active. We are bound to obey the sentence of the judge, or not to resist it, but not always to believe it just: but in matters of religion, such a judge is required whom we should be obliged to believe to have judged aright. So that in civil controversies every honest understanding man is fit to be a judge; but in religion none but he that is infallible.

18. Fifthly, In civil causes there is means and power, when the judge hath decreed, to compel men to obey his sentence; otherwise, I believe laws alone would be to as much purpose for the ending of differences, as laws and judges both. But all the power in the world is neither fit to convince, nor able to compel a man's conscience to consent to any thing. Worldly terror may prevail so far as to make men profess a religion which they believe not, (such men, I mean, who know not that there is a heaven provided for martyrs, and a hell for those that dissemble such truths as are necessary to be professed:) but to force, either any man to believe what he believes not, or any honest man to dissemble what he does believe, (if God commands him to profess it,) or to profess what he does not believe, all the powers in the world are too weak, with all the powers of hell to assist them.

19. Sixthly, In civil controversies the case can-

not be so put, but there may be a judge to end it, who is not a party; in controversies of religion, it is in a manner impossible to be avoided, but the judge must be a party. For this must be the first, whether he be a judge or no, and in that he must be a party. Sure I am, the pope, in the controversies of our time, is a chief party; for it highly concerns him, even as much as his popedom is worth, not to yield any one point of his religion to be erroneous. And he is a man subject to like passions with other men. And therefore we may justly decline his sentence, for fear temporal respects should either blind his judgment, or make him pronounce against it.

20. Seventhly, In civil controversies, it is impossible Titius should hold the land in question and Sempronius too; and therefore either the plaintiff must injure the defendant, by disquieting his possession, or the defendant wrong the plaintiff by keeping his right from him: but in controversies of religion the case is otherwise. I may hold my opinion, and do you no wrong; and you yours, and do me none: nay, we may both of us hold our opinion, and yet do ourselves no harm; provided the difference be not touching any thing necessary to salvation, and that we love truth so well, as to be diligent to inform our conscience, and constant in following it.

21. Eighthly, For the deciding of civil controversies, men may appoint themselves a judge: but in matters of religion, this office may be given to none but whom God hath designed for it; who doth not always give us those things which we conceive most expedient for ourselves.

22. Ninthly and lastly, For the ending of civil

controversies, who does not see, it is absolutely necessary, that not only judges should be appointed, but that it should be known and unquestioned who they are? Thus all the judges of our land are known men, known to be judges, and no man can doubt or question but these are the men. Otherwise, if it were a disputable thing, who were these judges, and they have no certain warrant for their authority, but only some topical congruities; would not any man say, such judges, in all likelihood, would rather multiply controversies than end them? So likewise if our Saviour, the King of heaven, had intended, that all controversies in religion should be by some visible judge finally determined, who can doubt, but in plain terms he would have expressed himself about this matter? He would have said plainly, The Bishop of Rome I have appointed to decide all emergent controversies; for that our Saviour designed the Bishop of Rome to this office, and yet would not say so, nor cause it to be written —*ad rei memoriam*—by any of the evangelists or apostles, so much as once; but leave it to be drawn out of uncertain principles, by thirteen or fourteen more uncertain consequences, he that can believe it, let him.

23. All these reasons, I hope, will convince you that though we have, and have great necessity of, judges in civil and criminal causes; yet you may not conclude from thence, that there is any public authorized judge to determine controversies in religion, nor any necessity there should be any.

24. But the Scripture stands in need of some watchful and unerring eye to guard it, by means of whose assured vigilancy, we may undoubtedly

receive it sincere and pure.—Very true; but this is no other than the watchful eye of Divine Providence; the goodness whereof will never suffer, that the Scripture should be depraved, and corrupted, but that in them should be always extant a conspicuous and plain way to eternal happiness. Neither can any thing be more palpably inconsistent with his goodness, than to suffer Scripture to be undiscernibly corrupted in any matter of moment, and yet to exact of men the belief of those verities, which without their fault, or knowledge, or possibility of prevention, were defaced out of them. So that God requiring of men to believe Scripture in its purity, engages himself to see it preserved in sufficient purity; and you need not fear but he will satisfy his engagement. You say—we can have no assurance of this, but your church's vigilancy.—But if we had no other, we were in a hard case; for, who could then assure us, that your church hath been so vigilant, as to guard Scripture from any the least alteration; there being various lections in the ancient copies of your Bibles. What security can your new-raised office of assurance give us, that the reading is true, which you now receive, and that false, which you reject? Certainly, they that anciently received and made use of these divers copies, were not all guarded by the church's vigilancy from having their Scripture altered from the purity of the original in many places. For of different readings, it is not in nature impossible, that all should be false; but more than one cannot possibly be true. Yet the want of such a protection, was no hinderance to their salvation; and why then shall having of it be necessary for ours? But,

en, this vigilancy of your church, what means ve we to be ascertained of it? First, The thing not evident of itself; which is evident, because any do not believe it: neither can any thing be etended to give evidence to it, but only some aces of Scripture; of whose incorruption more an any other what is it that can secure me? If ou say the church's vigilancy, you are in a cir-e, proving the Scriptures uncorrupted by the urch's vigilancy, and the church's vigilancy by e incorruption of some places of Scripture; and ain, the incorruption of those places by the urch's vigilancy. If you name any other means, en that means which secures me of the Scrip-res' incorruption in those places, will also serve assure me of the same in other places. For my rt, abstracting from Divine Providence, which ill never suffer the way to heaven to be blocked , or made invisible; I know no other means (I ean no other natural and rational means) to be sured hereof, than I have, that any other book is corrupted. For though I have a greater degree rational and human assurance of that than this, regard of divers considerations, which makes it ore credible—that the Scripture hath been pre-rved from any material alteration; yet my as-rance of both is of the same kind and condition; oth moral assurances, and neither physical nor athematical.

25. To the next argument the reply is obvi-s: that though we do not believe the books Scripture to be canonical, because they say so or other books that are not canonical may say ey are, and those that are so, may say nothing f it): yet we believe not this upon the autho-

rity of your church, but upon the credibility of universal tradition, which is a thing credible of itself, and therefore fit to be rested on; whereas the authority of your church is not so. And therefore your rest thereon is not rational, but merely voluntary. I might as well rest upon the judgment of the next man I meet, or upon the chance of a lottery for it. For by this means I only know I might err, but by relying on you, I know I should err. But yet (to return you one suppose for another), suppose I should for this and all other things submit to her direction, how could she assure me, that I should not be misled by doing so? She pretends indeed infallibility herein; but how can she assure us, that she hath it? What, by Scripture? That you say cannot assure us of its own infallibility, and therefore not of yours. What then, by reason? That you say may deceive in other things, and why not in this? How then will she assure us hereof? By saying so? Of this very affirmation there will remain the same question still, how can it prove itself to be infallibly true? Neither can there be an end of the like multiplied demands, till we rest in something evident of itself, which demonstrates to the world that this church is infallible. And seeing there is no such rock for the infallibility of this church to be settled on, it must of necessity, like the island of Delos, float up and down for ever. And yet upon this point, according to papists, all other controversies in faith depend.

26. To the 7—14. §. The sum and substance of the ten next paragraphs is this—That it appears by the confessions of some protestants, and the contentions of others, that the questions about

the canon of Scripture, what it is; and about the various readings and translations of it, which is true, and which not; are not to be determined by Scripture, and therefore that all controversies of religion are not decidable by Scripture.

27. To which I have already answered, saying, that when Scripture is affirmed to be the rule by which all controversies of religion are to be decided; those are to be excepted out of this generality, which are concerning the Scripture itself; for as that general saying of Scripture, "He hath put all things under his feet," is most true; though yet St. Paul tells us, that when it is said, "He hath put all things under him, it is manifest he is excepted who did put all things under him:" so when we say, that all controversies of religion are decidable by the Scripture, it is manifest to all but cavillers, that we do, and must, except from this generality, those which are touching the Scripture itself. Just as a merchant shewing a ship of his own, may say, all my substance is in this ship; and yet never intend to deny, that his ship is part of his substance, nor yet to say, that his ship is in itself. Or as a man may say, that a whole house is supported by the foundation, and yet never mean to exclude the foundation from being a part of the house, or to say, that it is supported by itself. Or, as you yourselves use to say, that the Bishop of Rome is the head of the whole church, and yet would think us but captious sophisters, should we infer from hence, that either you made him no part of the whole, or else made him head of himself. Your negative conclusion, therefore, that these questions touching Scripture, are not decidable by Scripture you

eded not have cited any authorities, nor urged y reason to prove it; it is evident of itself, and grant it without more ado. But your corollary om it, which you would insinuate to your unvary reader, that therefore they are to be decided by your, or any visible, church, is a mere inconsequence, and very like his collection, who because Pamphilus was not to have Glycerium for his wife, presently concluded that he must have her; as if there had been no more men in the world but Pamphilus and himself. For so you, as if there were nothing in the world capable of this office, but the Scripture, or the present church; having concluded against Scripture, you conceive, but too hastily, that you have concluded for the church. But the truth is, neither the one nor the other have any thing to do with this matter. For, first—The question, whether such or such a book be canonical Scripture, though it may be decided negatively out of Scripture, by shewing apparent and irreconcileable contradictions between it and some other book confessedly canonical; but affirmatively it cannot, but only by the testimonies of the ancient churches; any book being to be received as undoubtedly canonical, or to be doubted of as uncertain, or rejected as apocryphal, according as it was received, or doubted of, or rejected by them. Then for the question, of various readings which is the true? It is in reason evident, and confessed by your own pope, that there is no possible determination of it, but only by comparison with ancient copies. And, lastly, for controversies about different translations of Scripture, the learned have the same means to satisfy themselves in it, as in the ques-

tions which happen about the translation of any other author; that is, skill in the language of the original, and comparing translations with it. In which way, if there be no certainty, I would know what certainty you have, that your Doway Old, and Rhemish New Testament, are true translations? And then for the unlearned, those on your side are subject to as much, nay, the very same uncertainty with those on ours. Neither is there any reason imaginable, why an ignorant English protestant may not be as secure of the translation of our church, that it is free from error, if not absolutely, yet in matters of moment, as an ignorant English papist can be of his Rhemish Testament, or Doway Bible. The best direction I can give them, is to compare both together, and where there is no real difference (as in the translation of controverted places I believe there is very little) there to be confident, that they are right; where they differ, there to be prudent in the choice of the guides they follow. Which way of proceeding, if it be subject to some possible error, yet it is the best that either we or you have; and it is not required, that we use any better than the best we have.

28. You will say—dependance on your church's infallibility is a better.—I answer, it would be so if we could be infallibly certain, that your church is infallible, that is, if it were either evident of itself, and seen by its own light, or could be reduced unto, and settled upon, some principle that is so. But seeing you yourselves do not so much as pretend to enforce us to the belief hereof, by any proofs infallible and convincing; but only to induce us to it, by such as are, by your confession, only probable and prudential motives; cer-

tainly it will be to very little purpose, to put off your uncertainty for the first turn, and to fall upon it at the second; to please yourselves in building your house upon an imaginary rock, when you yourselves see and confess, that this very rock stands itself at the best but upon a frame of timber. I answer, secondly—That this cannot be a better way, because we are infallibly certain, that your church is not infallible, and indeed hath not the real prescription of this privilege, but only pleaseth herself with a false imagination and vain presumption of it; as I shall hereafter demonstrate by many unanswerable arguments.

29. Now seeing I make no scruple or difficulty to grant the conclusion of this discourse, that these controversies about Scripture, are not decidable by Scripture; and have shewed, that your deduction from it, that therefore they are to be determined by the authority of some present church, is irrational and inconsequent; I might well forbear to tire myself with an exact and punctual examination of your premises *κατὰ πόδα*, which, whether they be true or false, is to the question disputed wholly impertinent; yet because you shall not complain of tergiversation, I will run over them, and let nothing that is material and considerable pass without some structure or animadversion.

30. You pretend that M. Hooker acknowledgeth, that—that whereon we must rest our assurance, that the Scripture is God's word, is the church—and for this acknowledgment you refer us to l. iii. §. 8. Let the reader consult the place, and he shall find, that he and M. Hooker hath

been much abused, both by you here, and by M. Breerly, and others before you; and that M. Hooker hath not one syllable to your pretended purpose, but very much directly to the contrary. There he tells us, indeed, that ordinarily the first introduction and probable motive to the belief of the verity, is the authority of the church; but that it is the last foundation whereon our belief hereof is rationally grounded, that in the same place he plainly denies. His words are—"Scripture teacheth us that saving truth which God hath discovered unto the world by revelation, and it presumeth us taught otherwise, that itself is Divine and sacred. The question then being by what means we are taught this: *some answer, that to learn it we have no other way than tradition: as namely, that so we believe, because we, from our predecessors, and they from theirs, have so received. But is this enough? That which all men's experience teacheth them, may not in any wise be denied; and by experience we all know, †that the first outward motive leading men to esteem of the Scripture, is, the authority of God's church. For when we know‡ the whole church of God hath that opinion of the Scripture, we judge it at the first an impudent thing for any

* Some answer so, but he doth not.

† The first outward motive, not the last assurance whereon we rest.

‡ The whole church, that he speaks of, seems to be that particular church wherein a man is bred and brought up; and the authority of this he makes an argument, which presseth a man's modesty more than his reason. And in saying, it seems impudent to be of a contrary mind without cause, he implies - there may be a just cause to be of a contrary mind, and that then it were no impudence to be so.

man, bred and brought up in the church, to be of a contrary mind without cause. Afterwards, the more we bestow our labour upon reading orhearing the mysteries thereof,* the more we find, that the thing itself doth answer our received opinion concerning it; so that the former inducement prevailing somewhat† with us before, doth now much more prevail, when the very thing hath ministered farther reason. If infidels or atheists chance at any time to call it in question, this giveth us occasion to sift what reason there is, whereby the testimony of the church, concerning Scripture, and our own persuasion, which Scripture itself hath settled, may be proved a truth infallible. ‡In which case the ancient fathers being often constrained to shew what warrant they had so much to rely upon the Scriptures, endeavoured still to maintain the authority of the books of God, by arguments, such as the unbelievers themselves must needs think reasonable, if they judge thereof as they should. Neither is it a thing impossible, or greatly hard, even by such kind of proofs, so to manifest and clear that point, that no man living shall be able to deny it without denying some apparent principle, such as all men acknowledge to be true." §By this time I hope

* Therefore the authority of the church is not the pause whereon we rest; we had need of more assurance, and the intrinsical arguments afford it.

† Somewhat, but not much, until it be backed and enforced by farther reason; itself, therefore, is not the farthest reason, and the last resolution.

‡ Observe, I pray, our persuasion, and the testimony of the church concerning Scripture, may be proved true; therefore neither of them was in his account the farthest proof.

§ Natural reason then built on principles common to all men,

the reader sees sufficient proof of what I said in my reply to your Preface, that Mr. Breerly's great ostentation of exactness, is no very certain argument of his fidelity.

31. But—seeing the belief of the Scripture is a necessary thing, and cannot be proved by Scripture, how can the church of England teach, as she doth, Art. VI. that all things necessary are contained in Scripture?—

32. I have answered this already. And here again I say, that all but cavillers will easily understand the meaning of the Article to be, that all the Divine verities, which Christ revealed to his apostles, and the apostles taught the churches, are contained in Scripture; that is, all the material objects of our faith, whereof the Scripture is none, but only the means of conveying them unto us; which we believe not finally, and for itself, but for the matter contained in it. So that, if men did believe the doctrine contained in Scripture, it should no way hinder their salvation, not to know whether there were any Scripture or no. Those barbarous nations, Irenæus speaks of, were in this case, and yet no doubt but they might be saved. The end that God aims at, is the belief of the gospel, the covenant between God and man; the Scripture he hath provided as a means for this end, and this also we are to believe, but not as the last object of our faith, but as the instrument of it. When therefore we subscribe to the sixth Article, you must understand, that by articles of

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is the last resolution, unto which the church's authority is but the first inducement.

faith, they mean the final and ultimate objects of it, and not the means and instrumental objects; and then there will be no repugnance between what they say, and that which Hooker, and D. Covel, and D. Whitaker, and Luther here say.

33. But—protestants agree not in assigning the canon of Holy Scripture; Luther and Illyricus reject the Epistle of St. James; Kemnitius, and other Lutherans, the Second of Peter, the Second and Third of John, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, of Jude, and the Apocalypse. Therefore, without the authority of the church, no certainty can be had what Scripture is canonical.—

34. So also the ancient fathers, and not only fathers, but whole churches, differed about the certainty of the authority of the very same books; and by their difference shewed, they knew no necessity of conforming themselves herein to the judgment of your or any church: for, had they done so, they must have agreed all with that church, and consequently among themselves. Now, I pray, tell me plainly, had they sufficient certainty what Scripture was canonical, or had they not? If they had not, it seems there is no great harm or danger in not having such a certainty whether some books be canonical, or not, as you require; if they had, why may not protestants, notwithstanding their differences, have sufficient certainty hereof, as well as the ancient fathers and churches, notwithstanding theirs?

35. You proceed: and whereas the protestants of England in the sixth article have these words: "In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those books, of whose authority was never any doubt in the church;" you demand—

what they mean by them? Whether that, by the church's consent they are assured what Scriptures be canonical?—I answer for them, Yes, they are so. And whereas you infer from hence—this is to make the church judge.—I have told you already, that of this controversy we make the church the judge; but not the present church, much less the present Roman church, but the consent and testimony of the ancient and primitive church, which though it be but an highly probable inducement, and no demonstrative enforcement; yet methinks you should not deny, but it may be a sufficient ground of faith; whose faith, even of the foundation of all your faith, your church's authority is built lastly and wholly upon prudential motives.

36. But—by this rule the whole Book of Esther must quit the canon, because it was excluded by some in the church; by Melito, Athanasius, and Gregory Nazianzen.—Then, for aught I know, he that should think he had reason to exclude it now, might be still in the church as well as Melito, Athanasius, Nazianzen were. And while you thus inveigh against Luther, and charge him with Luciferian heresy, for doing that which you in this very place confess, that saints in heaven before him have done, "are you not partial, and a judge of evil thoughts?"

37. Luther's censures of Ecclesiastes, Job, and the prophets, though you make such tragedies with them, I see none of them but is capable of a tolerable construction, and far from having in them any fundamental heresy. He that condemns him for saying—the Book of Ecclesiastes is not full, that it hath many abrupt things—condemns him, for aught I can see, for speaking truth. And the

rest of the censure is but a bold and blunt expression of the same thing. The Book of Job may be a true history; and yet, as many true stories are, and have been, an argument of a fable to set before us an example of patience. And though the books of the prophets were not written by themselves, but by their disciples, yet it does not follow, that they were written casually (though, I hope, you will not damn all for heretics, that say some books of Scripture were written casually). Neither is there any reason they should the sooner be called in question for being written by their disciples, seeing being so written they had attestation from themselves. Was the Prophecy of Jeremy the less canonical for being written by Baruch? Or, because St. Peter, the master, dictated the gospel, and St. Mark, the scholar, writ it, is it the more likely to be called in question?

38. But leaving Luther, you return to our English canon of Scripture; and tell us, that in the New Testament, by the abovementioned rule (of whose authority was never any doubt in the church) divers books must be discanonized. Not so, for I may believe even those questioned books to have been written by the apostles, and to be canonical; but I cannot in reason believe this of them so undoubtedly, as of those books which were never questioned; at least, I have no warrant to damn any man that shall doubt of them or deny them now, having the example of saints in heaven, either to justify or excuse such their doubting or denial.

39. You observe, in the next place, that—our sixth Article, specifying by name all the books of the Old Testament, shuffles over those of the New

with this generality:—"All the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them canonical:"—and in this you fancy to yourself a mystery of iniquity. But if this be all the shuffling that the church of England is guilty of, I believe the church, as well as the king, may give for her motto, *Honi soit qui mal y pense:* for all the Bibles, which since the composing of the articles have been used and allowed by the church of England, do testify and even proclaim to the world, that by "commonly received," they meant received by the church of Rome, and other churches before the Reformation. I pray take the pains to look in them, and there you shall find the books, which the church of England accounts apocryphal, marked out, and severed from the rest, with this title in the beginning: The Books called Apocrypha; and with this close or seal in the end: The End of the Apocrypha. And having told you by name, and in particular, what books only she esteems apocryphal, I hope you will not put her to the trouble of telling you, that the rest are in her judgment canonical.

40. But if by "commonly received," she meant by the church of Rome; then, by the same reason, must she receive divers books of the Old Testament, which she rejects.—

41. Certainly a very good consequence. The church of England receives the books of the New Testament which the church of Rome receives: therefore, she must receive the books of the Old Testament which she receives. As if you should say, if you will do as we in one thing, you must in all things. If you will pray to God with us, ye must pray to saints with us. If you hold with us,

when we have reason on our side, you must do so, when we have no reason.

42. The discourse following is but a vain declamation. No man thinks that this controversy is to be tried by most voices, but by the judgment and testimony of the ancient fathers and churches.

43. But—with what coherence can we say in the former part of the Article, that by Scripture we mean those books that were never doubted of; and in the latter say, we receive "all the books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received," whereas of them many were doubted?—I answer, when they say—of whose authority there was never any doubt in the church—they mean not those only, of whose authority there was simply no doubt at all, by any man in the church; but such as were not at any time doubted of by the whole church, or by all churches; but had attestation, though not universal, yet at least sufficient, to make considering men receive them for canonical. In which number they may well reckon those epistles which were sometimes doubted of by some, yet whose number and authority was not so great, as to prevail against the contrary suffrages.

44. But—if to be "commonly received," passed for a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament by, why not of the Old?—You conclude many times very well; but still, when you do so, it is out of principles which no man grants: for who ever told you, that to be "commonly received" is a good rule to know the canon of the New Testament by? Have you been trained up in schools of subtilty, and cannot you see a great difference between these two—we receive the books of the New Testament as they are "commonly received,"

and we receive those that are "commonly received," because they are so? To say this, were indeed to make being "commonly received," a rule or reason to know the canon by. But to say the former, doth no more make it a rule, than you should make the church of England the rule of your receiving them, if you should say, as you may, the books of the New Testament we receive for canonical, as they are received by the church of England.

45. You demand—upon what infallible ground we agree with Luther against you in some, and with you against Luther in others?—And I also demand, upon what infallible ground you hold your canon, and agree neither with us nor Luther? For sure your differing from us both, is of itself no more apparently reasonable, than our agreeing with you in part, and in part with Luther. If you say, your church's infallibility is your ground; I demand again some infallible ground, both for the church's infallibility, and for this, that yours is the church; and shall never cease multiplying demands upon demands, until you settle me upon a rock: I mean, give such an answer, whose truth is so evident, that it needs no further evidence. If you say, this is universal tradition; I reply, your church's infallibility is not built upon it, and that the canon of Scripture, as we receive it, is: for we do not profess ourselves so absolutely and undoubtedly certain; neither do we urge others to be so, of those books, which have been doubted, as of those that never have.

46. The conclusion of your tenth §. is that—the Divinity of a writing cannot be known from itself alone, but by some extrinsical authority:—which

you need not prove; for no wise man denies it. But then, this authority is that of universal tradition, not of your church. For to me it is altogether as αὐτόπιστον, that the Gospel of St. Matthew is the word of God, as that all which your church says is true.

47. That believers of the Scripture, by considering the Divine matter, the excellent precepts, the glorious promises contained in it, may be confirmed in their faith of the Scriptures' Divine authority; and that among other inducements and enforcements hereunto, internal arguments have their place and force, certainly no man of understanding can deny. For my part, I profess, if the doctrine of the Scripture were not as good, and as fit to come from the Fountain of goodness, as the miracles by which it was confirmed were great, I should want one main pillar of my faith; and, for want of it, I fear, should be much staggered in it. Now this, and nothing else, did the Doctor mean in saying, "the believer sees, by that glorious beam of Divine light, which shines in Scripture, and by many internal arguments, that the Scripture is of Divine authority.—By this (saith he) he sees" it, that is, he is moved to, and strengthened in his belief of it; and by this partly, not wholly; by this, not alone, but with the concurrence of other arguments. He that will quarrel with him for saying so, must find fault with the master of the sentences, and all his scholars, for they all say the same. The rest of this paragraph, I am as willing it should be true, as you are to have it; and so let it pass as a discourse wherein we are wholly unconcerned. You might have met with an answerer, that would not have

suffered you to have said so much truth together; but to me it is sufficient, that it is nothing to the purpose.

48. In the next division, out of your liberality, you will suppose, that Scripture, like to a corporal light, is by itself alone able to determine and move our understanding to assent; yet notwithstanding this supposal, faith still (you say) must go before Scripture; because, as the light is visible only to those that have eyes, so the Scripture only to those, that have the eye of faith. But to my understanding, if Scripture do move and determine our understanding to assent; then the Scripture, and its moving, must be before this assent, as the cause must be before its own effect: now this very assent is nothing else but faith, and faith nothing else than the understanding's assent. And therefore (upon this supposal) faith doth, and must, originally proceed from Scripture, as the effect from its proper cause, and the influence and efficacy of Scripture is to be pre-supposed before the assent of faith, unto which it moves and determines; and, consequently, if this supposition of yours were true, there should need no other means precedent to Scripture to beget faith; Scripture itself being able (as here you suppose) to determine and move the understanding to assent, that is, to believe them, and the verities contained in them. Neither is this to say, that the eyes with which you see, are made by the light by which we see. For you are mistaken much, if you conceive, that in this comparison, faith answers to the eye. But if you will not prevent it, the analogy must stand thus: Scripture must answer to light; the eye of the soul, that is, the

understanding or the faculty of assenting, to the bodily eye: and, lastly, assenting or believing, to the act of seeing. As therefore the light, determining the eye to see, though it presupposeth the eye, which it determines, as every action doth the object on which it is employed, yet itself is presupposed and antecedent to the act of seeing, as the cause is always to its effect: so, if you will suppose that Scripture, like light, moves the understanding to assent, the understanding (that is, the eye and object on which it works) must be before this influence upon it; but the assent, that is, the belief whereto the Scripture moves, and the understanding is moved, which answers to the act of seeing, must come after: for, if it did assent already, to what purpose should the Scripture do that which was done before? Nay, indeed, how were it possible it should be so, any more than a father can beget a son that he hath already? Or an architect build a house, that is built already? Or, that this very world can be made again, before it be unmade? Transubstantiation indeed is fruitful of such monsters: but they that have not sworn themselves to the defence of error, will easily perceive, that *jam factum facere*, and *factum infectum facere*, are equally impossible. But I digress.

49. The close of this paragraph is a fit cover for such a dish: there you tell us, that if there be some other means precedent to Scripture to beget faith, this can be no other than the church. By the church, we know you do, and must, understand the Roman church: so that in effect you say, no man can have faith, but he must be moved to it by your church's authority: and that is to say, that the king, and all other protestants, to

whom you write, though they verily think they are Christians, and believe the gospel, because they assent to the truth of it, and would willingly die for it, yet indeed are infidels, and believe nothing. The Scripture tells us, "The heart of man knoweth no man, but the spirit of man which is in him." And who are you, to take upon you to make us believe, that we do not believe what we know we do? But if I may think verily that I believe the Scripture, and yet not believe it; how know you that you believe the Roman church? I am as verily and as strongly persuaded, that I believe the Scripture, as you are, that you believe the church; and if I may be deceived, why may not you? again: what more ridiculous, and against sense and experience, than to affirm, that there are not millions amongst you and us, that believe upon no other reason than their education, and the authority of their parents and teachers, and the opinion they have of them? the tenderness of the subject, and aptness to receive impressions, supplying the defect and imperfection of the agent. And will you proscribe from heaven all those believers of your own creed, who do indeed lay the foundation of their faith (for I cannot call it by any other name) no deeper than upon the authority of their father, or master, or parish-priest? Certainly, if they have no true faith, your church is very full of infidels. Suppose Xaverius by the holiness of his life had converted some Indians to Christianity, who could (for so I will suppose) have no knowledge of your church but from him, and therefore must last of all build their faith of the church upon their opinion of Xaverius: do these remain as very pagans after

conversion as they were before? Are they brought to assent in their souls, and obey in their lives, the gospel of Christ, only to be tantalized and not saved and not benefited, but deluded by it, because, forsooth, it is a man, and not the church, that begets faith in them? What if their motive to believe be not in reason sufficient? Do they therefore not believe what they do believe because they do it upon insufficient motives: they chose the faith imprudently, perhaps, but yet they chuse it. Unless you will have us believe, that that which is done is not done, because it is not done upon good reason; which is to say, that never any man living ever did a foolish action. But yet I know not why the authority of one holy man, which apparently hath no ends upon me, joined with the goodness of the Christian faith, might not be a far greater and more rational motive to me to embrace Christianity, than any I can have to continue in paganism. And therefore for shame, if not for love of truth, you must recant the fancy when you write again, and suffer true faith to be many times, where your church's infallibility hath no hand in the beginning of it: and be content to tell us hereafter, that we believe not enough; and not go about to persuade us we believe nothing, for fear with telling us what we know to be manifestly false, you should gain only this—not to be believed when you speak truth. Some pretty sophisms you may haply bring us, to make us believe we believe nothing; but wise men know, that reason against experience is always sophistical. And therefore as he that could not answer Zeno's subtilties against the existence of motion, could yet confute them, by doing that

which he pretended could not be done: so, if you should give me a hundred arguments to persuade me, because I do not believe in God, and the knots of them I could not untie, yet I should cut them in pieces with doing that, and knowing that I do so, which you pretend I cannot do.

50. In the thirteenth division we have again much ado about nothing: a great deal of stir you keep in confuting some, that pretend to know canonical Scripture to be such, by the titles of the books. But these men you do not name; which makes me suspect you cannot: yet it is possible there may be some such men in the world; for Gusman de Alferache hath taught us, that the fools hospital is a large place.

51. In the fourteenth §. we have very artificial juggling. D. Potter hath said—That the Scripture (he desires to be understood of those books wherein all Christians agree) is a principle and needs not to be proved among Christians.— His reason was, because that needs no farther proof, which is believed already. Now by this (you say) he means either, that the Scripture is one of these first principles, and most known in all sciences, which cannot be proved: which is to suppose, it cannot be proved by the church; and that is to suppose the question: or, he means, that it is not the most known in Christianity, and then it may be proved. Where we see plainly, that two most different things, most known in all sciences, and most known in Christianity, are captiously confounded. As if the Scripture might not be the first and most known principle in Christianity, and yet not the most known in all sciences; or, as if to be a first principle in Christ-

ianity, and in all sciences, were all one. That Scripture is a principle among Christians, that is, so received by all, that it need not be proved in any emergent controversy to any Christian, but may be taken for granted, I think few will deny: you yourselves are of this a sufficient testimony; for urging against us many texts of Scripture, you offer no proof of the truth of them, presuming we will not question it. Yet this is not to deny, that tradition is a principle more known than Scripture; but to say, it is a principle not in Christianity, but in reason, not proper to Christians, but common to all men.

52. But—it is repugnant to our practice to hold Scripture a principle, because we are wont to affirm, that one part of Scripture may be known to be canonical, and may be interpreted by another.—Where the former device is again put in practice. For to be known to be canonical, and to be interpreted, is not all one. That Scripture may be interpreted by Scripture, that protestants grant, and papists do not deny; neither does that any way hinder, but that this assertion—Scripture is the word of God, may be among Christians a common principle. But the first—that one part of Scripture may prove another part canonical, and need no proof of its own being so; for that you have produced divers protestants that deny it; but who they are that affirm it, *nondum constat*.

53. It is superfluous for you to prove out of St. Athanasius, and St. Austin, that we must receive the sacred canon, upon the credit of God's church: understanding by church, as here you explain vourself, the credit of tradition. And that not [illegible] of the present church, which we

pretend may deviate from the ancient, but—such a tradition, which involves an evidence of fact, and from hand to hand, from age to age, bringeth us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself, cometh to be confirmed by all these miracles and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true.—Thus you. Now prove the canon of Scripture, which you receive by such tradition, and we will allow it: prove your whole doctrine, or the infallibility of your church by such tradition, and we will yield to you in all things. Take the alleged places of St. Athanasius, and St. Augustine in this sense (which is your own), and they will not press us any thing at all. We will say, with Athanasius, that—only four gospels are to be received, because the canons of the holy and catholic church (understand of all ages since the perfection of the canon) have so determined.

54. We will subscribe to St. Augustine, and say, That we also would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the catholic church did move us, (meaning, by the church, the church of all ages, and that succession of Christians which takes in Christ and himself and his apostles.) Neither would Zuinglius have needed to cry out upon this saying, had he conceived, as you now do, that by the catholic church, the church of all ages, since Christ, was to be understood. As for the council of Carthage, it may speak not of such books only as were certainly canonical, and for the regulating of faith, but also of those which were only profitable, and lawful to be read in the church: which in England is a very slender argument that the book is canonical, where every body knows, that apo-

cryphal books are read as well as canonical. But howsoever, if you understand by fathers, not only their immediate fathers and predecessors in the gospel, but the succession of them from the apostles; they are right in the thesis, that whatsoever is received from these fathers, as canonical, is to be so esteemed; though, in the application of it, to this or that particular book, they may haply err, and think that book received as canonical, which was only received as profitable to be read, and think that book received alway, and by all, which was rejected by some, and doubted of by many.

55. But we cannot be certain in what language the Scriptures remain uncorrupted. Not so certain, I grant, as of that which we can demonstrate; but certain enough, morally certain, as certain as the nature of the thing will bear: so certain we may be, and God requires no more. We may be as certain as St. Augustine was, who, in his second book of Baptism, against the Donatists, c. 3. plainly implies, the Scripture might possibly be corrupted. He means sure in matters of little moment, such as concerns not the covenant between God and man. But thus he saith, the same St. Augustine, in his forty-eighth Epist. clearly intimates—*that in his judgment, the only preserva-

tive of the Scripture's integrity, was the translating it into so many languages and the general and perpetual use and reading of it in the church; for want whereof the works of particular doctors were more exposed to danger in this kind;—but the canonical Scripture being by this means guarded with universal care and diligence, was not obnoxious to such attempts. And this assurance of the Scripture's incorruption, is common to us with him; we therefore are as certain hereof, as St. Augustine was, and that I hope was certain enough. Yet if this does not satisfy you, I say farther, we are as certain hereof as your own Pope Sixtus Quintus was. He in his Preface to his Bible tells us, *that "in the pervestigation of the true and genuine text, it was perspicuously manifest to all men, that there was no argument more firm and certain to be relied on, than the faith of ancient books." Now this ground we have to build upon as well as he had; and therefore our certainty is as great, and stands upon as certain ground as his did.

56. This is not all I have to say in this matter: for I will add, moreover, that we are as certain in what language the Scripture is uncorrupted, as any man in your church was, until Clement the Eighth set forth your own approved edition of your vulgar translation. For you do not, nor cannot,

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et adversus eos quæ tanta notitiæ mole firmatæ sunt, sese erigere non prætermisit.—Aug. ep. 48. ad Vincent. cont. Donat. et Rogat.

* In hac germani textus pervestigatione, satis perspicue inter omnes constat, nullum argumentum esse aut certius aut firmius, quam antiquorum probatorum codicum Latinorum fidem, &c. sic Sixtus in Præf.

without extreme impudence, deny, that until then, there were great variety of copies current in divers parts of your church, and those very frequent in various lections; all which copies might possibly be false in some things, but more than one sort of them could not possibly be true in all things. Neither were it less impudence to pretend, that any man in your church, could until Clement's time have any certainty what that one true copy and reading was (if there were any one perfectly true). Some, indeed, that had got Sixtus's Bible, might, after the edition of that, very likely think themselves cock-sure of a perfect, true, uncorrupted translation, without being beholden to Clement: but how foully they were abused and deceived that thought so, the edition of Clement differing from that of Sixtus in a multitude of places, doth sufficiently demonstrate.

57. This certainty, therefore, in what language the Scripture remains uncorrupted, is it necessary to have it, or is it not? If it be not, I hope we may do well enough without it. If it be necessary, what became of your church for one thousand five hundred years together? All which time you must confess she had no such certainty; no one man being able truly and upon good ground to say, this or this copy of the Bible is pure, and perfect, and uncorrupted, in all things. And now at present, though some of you are grown to a higher degree of presumption in this point, yet are you as far as ever from any true, and real, and rational assurance of the absolute purity of your authentic translation, which I suppose myself to have proved unanswerably in divers places.

58. In the sixteenth division, it is objected to

protestants, in a long discourse transcribed out of the Protestants' Apology, that their translations of the Scripture are very different, and by each other mutually condemned. Luther's translation by Zuinglius, and others; that of the Zuinglians, by Luther; the translation of Oecolampadius, by the divines of Basil; that of Castalio, by Beza; that of Beza, by Castalio; that of Calvin, by Carolus Molinæus; that of Geneva, by M. Parks, and King James; and, lastly, one of our translations by the puritans.

59. All which might have been as justly objected against that great variety of translations extant in the primitive church, and made use of by the fathers and doctors of it. For which, I desire not that my word, but St. Augustine's may be taken: "They which have translated the Scriptures out of the Hebrew into Greek, may be numbered; but the Latin interpreters are innumerable: for, whensoever any one, in the first times of Christianity, met with a Greek Bible, and seemed to himself to have some ability in both languages, he presently ventured upon an interpretation." So he, in his second book of Christian doctrine, chap. 11. Of all these, that which was called the Italian translation was esteemed best; so we may learn from the same St. Augustine, in chap. 15. of the same book: "Amongst all these interpretations (saith he) let the Italian be preferred; for it keeps closer to the letter, and is perspicuous in the sense." Yet so far was the church of that time from presuming upon the absolute purity and perfection even of this best translation, that St. Jerome thought it necessary to make a new translation of the Old Testament out of the Hebrew fountain (which him-

self testifies in his book *de Viris illustribus)*; and to correct the vulgar version of the New Testament, according to the truth of the original Greek; amending many errors which had crept into it, whether by the mistake of the author, or the negligence of the transcribers; which work he undertook and performed at the request of Damascus, bishop of Rome. "You constrain me (saith he) to make a new work of an old: that after the copies of the Scriptures have been dispersed through the whole world, I should sit, as it were, an arbitrator amongst them; and because they vary among themselves, should determine what are those things (in them) which consent with the Greek verity." And after: "therefore this present preface promises the four gospels only, corrected by collation with Greek copies. But, that they might not be very dissonant from the custom of the Latin reading, I have so tempered with my style the translation of the ancients, that those things amended, which did seem to change the sense, other things I have suffered to remain as they were." So that in this matter protestants must either stand or fall with the primitive church.

60. The corruption that you charge Luther with, and the falsification that you impute to Zuinglius, what have we to do with them? or why may not we as justly lay to your charge the errors, which Lyranus, or Paulus Brugensis, or Laurentius Valla, or Cajetan, or Erasmus, or Arias Montanus, or Augustus Nebiensis, or Pagnine, have committed in their translation?

61. Which yet I say not, as if these translations of Luther and Zuinglius were absolutely indefensible; for what such great difference is there be-

tween faith without the works of the law, and faith alone without the works of the law? or, why does not without, alone, signify all one with alone, without? Consider the matter a little better, and observe the use of these phrases of speech in our ordinary talk, and perhaps you will begin to doubt whether you had sufficient ground for this invective. And then for Zuinglius, if it be true (as they say it is) that the language our Saviour spake in, had no such word as to signify, but used always to be instead of it, as it is certain the Scripture does in a hundred places; then this translation, which you do so declaim against, will prove no falsification in Zuinglius, but a calumny in you.

62. "But the faith of protestants relies upon Scripture alone; Scripture is delivered to most of them by translations; translations depend upon the skill and honesty of men, who certainly may err because they are men, and certainly do err, at least some of them, because their translations are contrary. It seems then the faith, and consequently the salvation of protestants, relies upon fallible and uncertain grounds."

63. This objection, though it may seem to do you a great service for the present; yet I fear you will repent the time that ever you urged it against us as a fault, that we make men's salvation depend upon uncertainties: for the objection returns upon you many ways; as first thus—the salvation of many millions of papists (as they suppose and teach) depends upon their having the sacrament of penance truly administered unto them. This again upon the minister's being a true priest. That such or such a man is priest, not himself,

ch less any other, can have any possible certain-
for it depends upon a great many contingent
d uncertain supposals. He that will pretend to
e certain of it, must undertake to know for a cer-
in all these things that follow.

64. First, That he was baptized with due matter. Secondly, With the due form of words, which he cannot know, unless he were both present and attentive. Thirdly, He must know that he was baptized with due intention, and that is, that the minister of his baptism was not a secret Jew, nor a Moor, nor an atheist (of all which kinds, I fear, experience gives you a just cause to fear, that Italy and Spain have priests not a few), but a Christian, in heart as well as profession (otherwise, believing the sacrament to be nothing, in giving it he could intend to give nothing), nor a Samosatenian, nor an Arian, but one that was capable of having due intention, from which they that believe not the doctrine of the Trinity are excluded by you. And, lastly, That he was neither drunk nor distracted at the administration of the sacrament, nor out of negligence or malice omitted his intention.

65. Fourthly, He must undertake to know, that the bishop which ordained him priest, ordained him completely with due matter, form, and intention; and, consequently, that he again was neither Jew nor Moor, nor atheist, nor liable to any such exception, as is inconsistent with due intention in giving the sacrament of orders.

66. Fifthly, He must undertake to know, that the bishop, which made him priest, was a priest himself; for your rule is, *nihil dat quod non habet:* and, consequently, that there was again none of the

former nullities in his baptism, which might make him incapable of ordination, nor no invalidity in his ordination, but a true priest to ordain him again, the requisite matter and form, and due intention all concurring.

67. Lastly, He must pretend to know the same of him that made him priest, and him that made him priest, even until he comes to the very fountain of priesthood. For take any one in the whole train and succession of ordainers, and suppose him, by reason of any defect, only a supposed, and not a true priest; then, according to your doctrine, he could not give a true, but only a supposed priesthood; and they that receive it of him, and again, they that derive it from them, can give no better than they received; receiving nothing but a name and shadow, can give nothing but a name and shadow; and so, from age to age, from generation to generation, being equivocal fathers, beget only equivocal sons; no principle in geometry being more certain than this, that—the unsuppliable defect of any necessary antecedent, must needs cause a nullity of all those consequences which depend upon it.—In fine, to know this one thing you must first know ten thousand others, whereof not any one is a thing that can be known, there being no necessity that it should be true, which only can qualify any thing for an object of science, but only, at the best, a high degree of probability that it is so. But then, that of ten thousand probables, no one should be false; that of ten thousand requisites, whereof any one may fail, not one should be wanting, this to me is extremely improbable, and even cousin-german to impossible. So that the assurance hereof is like

a machine composed of an innumerable multitude of pieces, of which it is strangely unlikely but some will be out of order; and yet if any one be so, the whole fabric of necessity falls to the ground: and he that shall put them together, and maturely consider all the possible ways of lapsing, and nullifying a priesthood in the church of Rome, I believe will be very inclinable to think, that it is a hundred to one, that, amongst a hundred seeming priests, there is not one true one: nay, that it is not a thing very improbable, that amongst those many millions, which make up the Romish hierarchy, there are not twenty true. But be the truth in this what it will be, once this is certain, that they, which make men's salvation (as you do) depend upon priestly absolution; and this again (as you do) upon the truth and reality of the priesthood that gives it; and this, lastly, upon a great multitude of apparent uncertainties, are not the fittest men in the world to object to others, as a horrible crime—that they make men's salvation depend upon fallible and uncertain foundations.—And let this be the first retorting of your argument.

68. But suppose this difficulty assoyled, and that an angel from heaven should ascertain you (for other assurances you can have none) that the person you make use of is a true priest, and a competent minister of the sacrament of penance; yet still the doubt will remain, whether he will do you that good which he can do, whether he will pronounce the absolving words with intent to absolve you? For perhaps he might bear you some secret malice, and project to himself your damnation for a complete Italian revenge. Perhaps (as

the tale is of a priest that was lately burnt in France) he may upon some conditions have compacted with the devil to give no sacraments with intention. Lastly, He may be (for aught you can possibly know) a secret Jew, or Moor, or anti-trinitarian, or perhaps such an one as is so far from intending your forgiveness of sins and salvation by this sacrament, that in his heart he laughs at all these things, and thinks sin nothing, and salvation a word. All these doubts you must have clearly resolved (which can hardly be done but by another revelation) before you can upon good grounds assure yourself, that your true priest gives you true and effectual absolution. So that when you have done as much as God requires for your salvation, yet can you by no means be secure, but that you may have the ill luck to be damned; which is to make salvation a matter of chance, and not of choice; and which a man may fail of, not only by an ill life, but by ill fortune. Verily, a most comfortable doctrine for a considering man lying upon his death-bed, who either feels or fears that his repentance is but attrition only, and not contrition, and consequently believes, that if he be not absolved really by a true priest, he cannot possibly escape damnation. Such a man, for his comfort, you tell first (you that will have men's salvation depend upon no uncertainties) that though he verily believe that his sorrow for his sins is a true sorrow, and his purpose for amendment a true purpose, yet he may deceive himself, perhaps it is not; and, if it be not, he must be damned. You bid him hope well; but *spes est rei incertæ nomen.* You tell him, secondly, that though the party he confesses to, seem to be

a true priest, yet, for aught he knows, or for aught himself knows, by reason of some secret undiscernible invalidity in his baptism, or ordination, he may be none; and if he be none, he can do nothing. This is a hard saying; but this is not the worst: you tell him, thirdly, that he may be in such a state, that he cannot, or if he can, that he will not, give the sacrament with due intention; and if he does not, all is in vain. Put case a man by these considerations should be cast into some agonies; what advice, what comfort would you give him? Verily, I know not what you could say to him, but this: that, first, for the qualification required on his part, he might know that he desired to have true sorrow, and that is sufficient: but then, if he should ask you, why he might not know his sorrow to be a true sorrow, as well as his desire to be sorrowful to be a true desire? I believe you would be put to silence. Then, secondly, to quiet his fears, concerning the priest and his intention, you should tell him, by my advice, that God's goodness (which will not suffer him to damn men for not doing better than their best) will supply all such defects, as to human endeavours were unavoidable. And therefore though his priest were indeed no priest, yet to him he should be as if he were one; and if he gave absolution without intention, yet in doing so he should hurt himself only, and not his penitent. This were some comfort indeed, and this were to settle men's salvation upon reasonable certain grounds. But this, I fear, you will never say; for this were to reverse many doctrines established by your church; and, besides, to degrade your priesthood from a great part of their honour,

by lessening the strict necessity of the laity's dependance upon them: for it were to say, that the priest's intention is not necessary to the obtaining of absolution; which is to say, that it is not in the parson's power to damn whom he will in his parish, because, by this rule, God should supply the defect which his malice had caused: and, besides, it were to say, that infants dying without baptism might be saved; God supplying the want of baptism, which to them is unavoidable: but, beyond all this, it were to put into my mouth a full and satisfying answer to your argument, which I am now returning; so that in answering my objection you should answer your own: for then I should tell you, that it were altogether as abhorrent from the goodness of God, and as repugnant to it, to suffer an ignorant layman's soul to perish, merely for being misled by an undiscernible false translation, which yet was commended to him by the church, which (being of necessity to credit some in this matter) he had reason to rely upon, either above all other, or as much as any other, as it is to damn a penitent sinner for a secret defect in that desired absolution, which his ghostly father perhaps was an atheist, and could not give him, or was a villain, and would not. This answer, therefore, which alone would serve to comfort your penitent in his perplexities, and to assure him, that he cannot fail of salvation, if he will not; for fear of inconvenience you must forbear: and seeing you must, I hope you will, come down from the pulpit, and preach no more against others for making men's salvation depend upon fallible and uncertain grounds, lest by judging others, you make yourselves and your own church inexcusa-

ble, who are strongly guilty of this fault, a
all the men and churches of the world; wher
have already given you two very pregnant
monstrations, drawn from your presumptuou
ing God and salvation to your sacraments;
the efficacy of them to your priest's qualifica
and intentions.

69. Your making the salvation of infants de
on baptism a casual thing, and in the powe
man to confer, or not confer, would yield n
third of the same nature. And your suspen
the same on the baptizer's intention, a fo
And, lastly, your making the real presenc
Christ in the eucharist depend upon the ca
ties of the consecrator's true priesthood and i
tion, and yet commanding men to believe i
certain that he is present, and to adore th
crament, which, according to your doctrine
aught they can possibly know, may be no
else but a piece of bread, so exposing them t
danger of idolatry, and consequently of damna
doth offer me a fifth demonstration of the
conclusion, if I thought fit to insist upon t
But I have no mind to draw any more out of
fountain; neither do I think it charity to clo
reader with uniformity, when the subject af
variety.

70. Sixthly, Therefore, I return it thus:
faith of papists relies alone upon their chu
infallibility. That there is any church infall
and, that theirs is it, they pretend not to bel
but only upon prudential motives. Depend
upon prudential motives they confess to be
noxious to a possibility of erring. What
remaineth, but truth, faith, salvation, and

must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground?

71. Seventhly, The faith of papists relies upon the church alone. The doctrine of the church is delivered to most of them by their parish-priest, or ghostly father, or, at least, by a company of priests, who, for the most part, sure, are men and not angels, in whom nothing is more certain than a most certain possibility to err. What then remaineth, but that truth, faith, salvation, and all, must in them rely upon a fallible and uncertain ground?

72. Eighthly, Thus: it is apparent and undeniable, that many thousands there are, who believe your religion upon no better grounds, than a man may have for the belief almost of any religion. As some believe it, because their forefathers did so, and they were good people. Some, because they were christened and brought up in it. Some, because many learned and religious men are of it. Some, because it is the religion of their country, where all other religions are persecuted and proscribed. Some, because protestants cannot shew a perpetual succession of professors of all their doctrines. Some because the service of your church is more stately, and pompous, and magnificent. Some, because they find comfort in it. Some, because your religion is farther spread, and hath more professors of it than the religion of protestants. Some, because your priests compass sea and land to gain proselytes to it. Lastly, an infinite number by chance, and they know not why, but only because they are sure they are in the right. This which I say, is a most certain

ously, you will not deny it. And, without question, he that builds his faith upon our English translation, goes upon a more prudent ground than any of these can, with reason, be pretended to be. What then can you allege, but that with you, rather than with us, truth, and faith, and salvation, and all, rely upon fallible and uncertain grounds?

73. Ninthly, Your Rhemish and Doway translations are delivered to your proselytes (such, I mean, that are dispensed with, for the reading of them) for the direction of their faith and lives. And the same may be said of your translation of the Bible into other national languages, in respect of those that are licensed to read them. This, I presume, you will confess. And, moreover, that these translations came not by inspiration, but were the productions of human industry; and that not angels, but men, were the authors of them. Men, I say, mere men, subject to the same passions and to the same possibility of erring with our translators. And then, how does it not unavoidably follow, that in them which depend upon these translations for their direction, faith, and truth, and salvation, and all, relies upon fallible and uncertain grounds?

74. Tenthly, and lastly (to lay the axe to the root of the tree) the Helena which you so fight for, your vulgar translation, though some of you believe, or pretend to believe, it to be, in every particular of it, the pure and uncorrupted word of God; yet others among you, and those as good and zealous catholics as you, are not so confident hereof.

75. First, For all those who have made transla-

tions of the whole Bible or any part of it differ many times in sense from the vulgar, as Lyran Cajetan, Pagnine, Arias, Erasmus, Valla, St chus, and others, it is apparent, and even pal ble, that they never dreamt of any absolute p fection and authentical infallibility of the vul translation. For, if they had, why did they many places reject it, and differ from it?

76. Vega was present at the council of Tre when the decree was made, which made the v gar edition (then not extant any where in t world) authentical, and not to be rejected up any pretence whatsoever. At the forming t decree, Vega, I say, was present, understood t mind of the council as well as any man, and p fesses, that he was instructed in it by the pre dent of it, the Cardinal S. Cruce. And yet hath written, that the council in this decree mea to pronounce this translation free (not simply fr all error) but only from such errors, out of wh any opinion pernicious to faith and manners mig be collected. This, Andradius, in his defence that council, reports of Vega, and assents to hi self. Driedo, in his book of the translation Holy Scripture, hath these words, very pregn and pertinent to the same purpose: "The see ap stolic hath approved or accepted Jerome's editi not as so wholly consonant to the original, and entire, and pure, and restored in all things, tha may not be lawful for any man, either by comp ing it with the fountain, to examine it, or, in so places, to doubt, whether or no Jerome did t derstand the true sense of the Scripture; l only, as an edition to be preferred before all oth then extant, and no where deviating from t

truth in the rules of faith and good life." Mariana, even where he is a most earnest advocate for the vulgar edition, yet acknowledges the imperfection of it in these words: "The faults of the vulgar edition are not approved* by the decree of the council of Trent, a multitude whereof we did collect from the variety of copies." And again, "We maintain, that the Hebrew and Greek were by no means rejected by the Trent fathers; and that the Latin edition is indeed approved: yet not so, as if they did deny, that some places might be translated more plainly, some more properly, whereof it were easy to produce innumerable examples." And this he there professes to have learnt of Laines, the then general of the society; who was a great part of that council, present at all the actions of it, and of very great authority in it.

77. To this so great authority he adds a reason of his opinion; which with all indifferent men will be of a far greater authority. "If the council (saith he) hath purposed to approve an edition in all respects, and to make it of equal authority and credit with the fountains, certainly they ought with exact care first to have corrected the errors of the interpreter:" which certainly they did not.

78. Lastly, Bellarmine himself, though he will not acknowledge any imperfection in the vulgar edition, yet he acknowledges, that the case may, and does oft-times, so fall out, that †it is impossible to discern, which is the true reading of the vulgar edition, but only by recourse unto the originals and dependance upon them.

79. From all which it may evidently be collected, that though some of you flatter yourselves with a vain imagination of the certain absolute purity and perfection of your vulgar edition, yet the matter is not so certain, and so resolved, but that the best learned men amongst you are often at a stand, and very doubtful sometimes whether your vulgar translation be true, and sometimes whether this or that be your vulgar translation, and sometimes undoubtedly resolved, that your vulgar translation is no true translation, nor consonant to the original, as it was at first delivered. And what then can be alleged, but that out of your own grounds it may be inferred and enforced upon you, that not only in your laymen, but your clergymen and scholars, faith and truth, and salvation and all, depends upon fallible and uncertain grounds? And thus, by ten several retortions of this one argument, I have endeavoured to shew you, how ill you have complied with your own advice, which was—to take heed of urging arguments that might be returned upon you. I should now, by a direct answer, shew that it presseth not us at all: but I have in passing, done it already in the end of the second retortion of this argument, and thither I refer the reader.

80. Whereas therefore you exhort them, that will have assurance of true Scriptures, to fly to your church for it;—I desire to know (if they should follow your advice) how they should be assured, that your church can give them any such assurance, which hath been confessedly so negligent, as to suffer many whole books of Scripture to be utterly lost: again, in those that remain, confessedly so negligent, as to suffer the originals

of these that remain to be corrupted: and, lastly, so careless of preserving the integrity of the copies of her translation, as to suffer infinite variety of readings to come into them, without keeping any one perfect copy, which might have been as the standard and Polycletus's canon to correct the rest by. So that which was the true reading, and which the false, it was utterly undiscernible, but only by comparing them with the originals, which also she pretends to be corrupted.

81. But—Luther himself, by unfortunate experience, was at length enforced to confess thus much, saying, If the world last longer, it will be again necessary to receive the decrees of councils, by reason of divers interpretations of Scripture which now reign.—

82. And what if Luther, having a pope in his belly, (as he was wont to say that most men had) and desiring perhaps to have his own interpretations pass without examining, spake such words in heat of argument: do you think it reasonable, that we should subscribe to Luther's divinations and angry speeches? Will you oblige yourself to answer for all the assertions of your private doctors? If not, why do you trouble us with what Luther says, and what Calvin says? Yet this I say not, as if these words of Luther made any thing at all for your present purpose. For what if he feared, or pretended to fear, that the infallibility of councils being rejected, some men would fall into greater errors than were imposed upon them by the councils? Is this to confess, that there is any present visible church, upon whose bare authority we may infallibly receive the true Scriptures, and the true sense of them? Let the reader judge. But, in my

opinion, to fear a greater inconvenience may follow from the avoiding of the less, is not to confess that the less is none at all.

83. For Dr. Covel's commending your translation, what is it to the business in hand? Or how proves it the perfection, of which it is here contested, any more than St. Augustine's commending the Italian translation argues the perfection of that, or that there was no necessity, that St. Jerome should correct it? Dr. Covel commends your translation, and so does the Bishop of Chichester, and so does Dr. James, and so do I; but I commend it for a good translation, not for a perfect. Good may be good, and deserve commendations; and yet better may be better. And though he says, that—the then approved translation of the church of England, is that which cometh nearest the vulgar—yet he does not say, that it agrees exactly with it. So that whereas you infer, that the truth of your translation must be the rule to judge of the goodness of ours; this is but a vain flourish. For, to say of our translations, that is the best which comes nearest the vulgar (and yet it is but one man that says so) is not to say, it is therefore the best, because it does so: for this may be true by accident, and yet the truth of our translation no way depend upon the truth of yours: for, had that been their direction, they would not only have made a translation that should come near to yours, but such a one, which should exactly agree with it, and be a translation of your translation.

84. Ad. 17. §. In this division you charge us with great uncertainty concerning the meaning of Scripture—which hath been answered already, by saying, that, if you speak of plain places (and

in such all things necessary are contained) we are sufficiently certain of the meaning of them, neither need they any interpreter: if of obscure and difficult places, we confess we are uncertain of the sense of many of them: but then we say there is no necessity we should be certain: for, if God's will had been, we should have understood him more certainly, he would have spoken more plainly. And we say, besides, that as we are uncertain, so are you too; which he that doubts of, let him read your commentators upon the Bible, and observe their various and dissonant interpretations, and he shall in this point need no further satisfaction.

85. But seeing there are contentions among us, we are taught by nature and Scripture and experience (so you tell us out of Mr. Hooker) to seek for the ending of them, by submitting unto some judicial sentence, whereunto neither part may refuse to stand.—This is very true. Neither should you need to persuade us to seek such a means of ending all our controversies, if we could tell where to find it. But this we know, that none is fit to pronounce for all the world a judicial definitive obliging sentence in controversies of religion, but only such a man, or such a society of men, as is authorized thereto by God. And besides, we are able to demonstrate, that it hath not been the pleasure of God to give to any man, or society of men, any such authority. And therefore, though we wish heartily, that all controversies were ended, as we do, that all sin were abolished, yet we have little hope of the one, or the other, until the world be ended: and in the meanwhile, think it best to content ourselves with, and

to persuade others unto, an unity of charity, mutual toleration; seeing God hath authorize man to force all men to unity of opinion. Nei do we think it fit to argue thus; to us it se convenient there should be one judge of all troversies for the whole world; therefore hath appointed one; but more modest and r reasonable to collect thus: God hath appoi no such judge of controversies; therefore, th it seems to us convenient there should be one, it is not so; or though it were convenient for u have one, yet it hath pleased God (for rea best known to himself) not to allow us this venience.

86. Dr. Field's words, which follow, I co are somewhat more pressing: and if he had infallible, and the words had not slipt unadvis from him, they were the best argument in book. But yet its evident out of his book, ar acknowledged by some of your own, tha never thought of any one company of Chris invested with such authority from God, tha men were bound to receive their decrees wit examination, though they seem contrary to S ture and reason, which the church of Rome quires. And therefore, if he have in his Pr strained too high in commendation of the su he writes of (as writers very often do in their faces and dedicatory epistles) what is that t Besides, by all the societies of the world, it i impossible, not very improbable, he might n all that are, or have been, in the world, and s clude even the primitive church; and her con nion we shall embrace, her direction we shal low, her judgment we shall rest in, if we be

the Scripture, endeavour to find the true sense of it, and live according to it.

87. Ad. §. 18. That the true interpretation of the Scripture ought to be received from the church, you need not prove; for it is very easily granted by them, who profess themselves very ready to receive all truths, much more the true sense of Scripture, not only from the church, but from any society of men, nay, from any man whatsoever.

88. That the church's interpretation of Scripture is always true—that is it which you would have said: and that in some sense may be also admitted; viz. if you speak of that church (which before you spake of in the 14th §.) that is, of the church of all ages since the apostles. Upon the tradition of which church you there told us—we were to receive the Scripture, and to believe it to be the word of God.—For there you teach us, that—our faith of Scripture depends on a principle, which requires no other proof; and that, such is tradition, which from hand to hand, and age to age, bringing us up to the times and persons of the apostles, and our Saviour himself, cometh to be confirmed by all those miracles, and other arguments, whereby they convinced their doctrine to be true.—Wherefore the ancient fathers avouch, that we must receive the sacred Scripture upon the tradition of this church. The tradition then of this church, you say, must teach us what is Scripture; and we are willing to believe it. And now, if you make it good unto us, that the same tradition, down from the apostles, hath delivered from age to age, and from hand to hand, any interpretation of any Scripture, we are ready to em-

brace that also. But now, if you will argue thus: the church in one sense tells us what is Scripture, and we believe; therefore, if the church, taken in another sense, tells us, this or that is the meaning of the Scripture, we are to believe that also; this is too transparent sophistry, to take any but those that are willing to be taken.

89. If there be any traditive interpretation of Scripture, produce it, and prove it to be so; and we embrace it. But the tradition of all ages is one thing; and the authority of the present church, much more of the Roman church, which is but a part, and a corrupted part of the catholic church, is another. And therefore, though we are ready to receive both Scripture, and the sense of Scripture, upon the authority of original tradition, yet we receive neither the one nor the other, upon the authority of your church.

90. First, For the Scriptures how can we receive them upon the authority of your church, who hold now those books to be canonical, which formerly you rejected from the canon? I instance in the Book of Maccabees, and the Epistle to the Hebrews: the first of these you held not to be canonical in St. Gregory's time, or else he was no member of your church; for it is apparent* he held otherwise. The second you rejected from the canon in St. Jerome's time, as it is evident out of †many places of his works.

* See Greg. Mor. l. xix. c. xiii.

† Thus he testifies, Com. in Isa. c. vi. in these words: "Unde et Paulus Apost. in Epist. ad Heb. (quam Latina consuetudo non recipit)." And again, in c. viii. in these, "In Epist. quæ ad Hebræos scribitur (licet eam Latina consuetudo inter canonicas Scripturas non recipiat)" &c.

91. If you say (which is all you can say) that Jerome spake this of the particular Roman church, not of the Roman catholic church—I answer, there was none such in his time, none that was called so. Secondly, What he spake of the Roman church, must be true of all other churches, if your doctrine of the necessity of the conformity of all other churches to that church, were then catholic doctrine. Now then chuse whether you will, either that the particular Roman church was not then believed to be the mistress of all other churches, notwithstanding *ad hanc ecclesiam, necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, omnes qui sunt undique fideles;* which Cardinal Perron and his translatress so often translate false: or, if you say she was, you will run into a greater inconvenience, and be forced to say, that all the churches of that time rejected from the canon the Epistle to the Hebrews, together with the Roman church. And, consequently, that the catholic church may err in rejecting from the canon Scriptures truly canonical.

92. Secondly, How can we receive the Scripture upon the authority of the Roman church, which hath delivered at several times Scriptures in many places different and repugnant, for authentical and canonical? which is most evident out of the place of Malachi, which is so often quoted for the sacrifice of the mass, that either all the ancient fathers had false Bibles, or yours is false: most evident likewise from the comparing the story of Jacob in Genesis, with that which is cited out of it, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, according to the vulgar edition: but, above all, to any one who shall com-

pare the Bibles of Sixtus and Clement, so evident, that the wit of man cannot disguise it.

93. And thus you see what reason we have to believe your antecedent, that your church it is, which must declare what books be true Scripture. Now, for the consequence, that certainly is as liable to exception as the antecedent: for if it were true, that God had promised to assist you, for the delivering of true Scripture, would this oblige him, or would it follow from hence, that he had obliged himself to teach you, not only sufficiently, but effectually and irresistibly, the true sense of Scripture? God is not defective in things necessary; neither will he leave himself without witness, nor the world without means of knowing his will and doing it. And therefore it was necessary, that by his providence he should preserve the Scripture from any undiscernible corruption in those things which he would have known; otherwise it is apparent, it had not been his will, that these things should be known, the only means of continuing the knowledge of them being perished. But now neither is God lavish in superfluities; and therefore, having given us means sufficient for our direction, and power sufficient to make use of these means, he will not constrain or necessitate us to make use of these means: for that were to cross the end of our creation, which was to be glorified by our free obedience; whereas necessity and freedom cannot stand together: that were to reverse the law which he hath prescribed to himself in his dealing with man; and that is, to set life and death before him, and leave him in the hands of his own counsel. God gave the wise men a star to lead them to Christ,

but he did not necessitate them to follow the guidance of this star; that was left to their liberty. God gave the children of Israel a fire to lead them by night, and a pillar of cloud by day; but he constrained no man to follow them; that was left to their liberty. So he gives the church the Scripture; which in those things which are to be believed or done are plain and easy to be followed like the wise men's star. Now that which he desires of us, on our part, is the obedience of faith, and love of the truth, and desire to find the true sense of it, and industry in searching it, and humility in following, and constancy in professing it; all which, if he should work in us by an absolute irresistible necessity, he could no more require of us, as our duty, than he can of the sun to shine, of the sea to ebb and flow, and of all other creatures to do those things which by mere necessity they must do, and cannot chuse. Besides, what an impudence is it to pretend, that your church is infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of the Scripture, whereas there are thousands of places of Scripture, which you do not pretend certainly to understand, and about the interpretation whereof, your own doctors differ among themselves! If your church be infallibly directed concerning the true meaning of Scripture, why do not your doctors follow her infallible direction? and, if they do, how comes such difference among them in their interpretations?

94. Again, Why does your church thus put her candle under a bushel, and keep her talent of interpreting Scripture infallibly thus long wrapped up in napkins? Why sets she not forth infallible commentaries or expositions upon all the Bible?

Is it, because this would not be profitable for Christians, that Scripture should be interpreted? It is blasphemous to say so. The Scripture itself tells us, "all Scripture is profitable." And the Scripture is not so much the words as the sense. And if it be not profitable, why does she employ particular doctors to interpret Scriptures fallibly? unless we must think that fallible interpretations of Scripture are profitable, and infallible interpretations would not be so.

95. If you say—the Holy Ghost, which assists the church in interpreting, will move the church to interpret when he shall think fit, and that the church will do it when the Holy Ghost shall move her to do it—I demand, whether the Holy Ghost's moving of the church to such works as these, be resistible by the church, or irresistible: if resistible, then the Holy Ghost may move, and the church may be moved. As certainly the Holy Ghost doth always move to an action, when he shews us plainly, that it would be for the good of men, and honour of God; as he that hath any sense will acknowledge, that an infallible exposition of Scripture could not but be; and there is no conceivable reason why such a work should be put off a day, but only because you are conscious to yourselves you cannot do it, and therefore make excuses. But if the moving of the Holy Ghost be irresistible, and you are not yet so moved to go about this work, then I confess you are excused. But then I would know, whether those popes, which so long deferred calling of a council for the reformation of your church, at length pretended to be effected by the council of Trent, whether they may excuse themselves, for

that they were not moved by the Holy Ghost to do it? I would know, likewise, as this motion is irresistible when it comes, so whether it be so simply necessary to the moving of your church to any such public action, that it cannot possibly move without it? that is, whether the pope now could not, if he would, seat himself *in cathedra*, and fall to writing expositions upon the Bible for the direction of Christians to the true sense of it? If you say he cannot, you will make yourself ridiculous; if he can, then I would know, whether he should be infallibly directed in these expositions or no; if he should, then what need he to stay for irresistible motion? Why does he not go about this noble work presently? If he should not, how shall we know that the calling of the council of Trent was not upon his own voluntary motion, or upon human importunity and suggestion, and not upon the motion of the Holy Ghost; and, consequently, how shall we know whether he were assistant to it or no, seeing he assists none but what he himself moves to? And whether he did move the pope to call this council, is a secret thing, which we cannot possibly know, nor perhaps the pope himself.

96. If you say, your meaning is only—that the church shall be infallibly guarded from giving any false sense of any Scripture, and not infallibly assisted positively to give the true sense of all Scripture—I put to you your own question, why should we believe the Holy Ghost will stay there? Or, why may we not as well think he will stay at the first thing, that is, in teaching the church what books be true Scripture? for, if the Holy Ghost's assistance be promised to all things profitable,

then will he be with them infallibly, not only to guard them from all errors, but to guide them to all profitable truths, such as the true sense of all Scripture would be. Neither could he stay there, but defend them irresistibly from all vices: nor there neither, but infuse into them irresistibly all virtues; for all these things would be much for the benefit of Christians. If you say, he cannot do this without taking away their free-will in living; I say, neither can he necessitate men to believe aright, without taking away their free-will in believing, and in professing their belief.

97. To the place of St. Augustine, I answer, that not the authority of the present church, much less of a part of it (as the Roman church is) was that which alone moved St. Augustine to believe the gospel, but the perpetual tradition of the churches of all ages. Which you yourself have taught us to be the only principle by which the Scripture is proved, and which itself needs no proof; and to which you have referred this very saying of St. Augustine, *ego vero evangelio non crederem, nisi,* &c. chap. ii. §. 14. And, in the next place, which you cite out of his book, De Util. Cred. c. xiv. he shews that his motives to believe, were fame, celebrity, consent, antiquity. And seeing this tradition, this consent, this antiquity, did as fully and powerfully move him not to believe Manichæus, as to believe the gospel (the Christian tradition being as full against Manichæus, as it was for the gospel) therefore he did well to conclude upon these grounds, that he had as much reason to disbelieve Manichæus, as to believe the gospel. Now if you can truly say, that the same fame, celebrity, consent, antiquity, that the same universal and original tra-

tion lies against Luther and Calvin, as did against Manichæus, you may do well to apply the argument against them, otherwise it will be to little purpose to substitute their names instead of Manichæus, unless you can shew the thing agrees to them as well as him.

98. If you say, that St. Augustine speaks here of the authority of the present church, abstracted from consent with the ancient; and therefore you, seeing you have the present church on your side against Luther and Calvin, as St. Augustine against Manichæus, may urge the same words against them which St. Augustine did against him.—

99. I answer, First, That it is a vain presumption of yours, that the catholic church is of your side. Secondly, That if St. Augustine speak here of that present church, which moved him to believe the gospel, without consideration of the antiquity of it, and its both personal and doctrinal succession from the apostles; his argument will be like a buskin, that will serve any leg: it will serve to keep an Arian or a Grecian from being a Roman catholic, as well as a catholic from being an Arian or a Grecian: inasmuch as the Arians and Grecians did pretend to the title of catholics and the church, as much as the papists now do. If then you should have come to an ancient Goth or Vandal, whom the Arians converted to Christianity, and should have moved him to your religion; might he not say the very same words to you as St. Augustine to the Manichæans? "I would not believe the gospel, unless the authority of the [illegible] did move me. Them therefore whom I [illegible] gospel, why should I

not obey, saying to me, Do not believe the Homoousians? Choose what thou pleasest: if thou shalt say, Believe the Arians, they warn me not to give any credit to you: if therefore I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If thou say, Do not believe the Arians, thou shalt not do well to force me to the faith of the Homoousians, because by the preaching of the Arians, I believed the gospel itself. If you say, You do well to believe them, commending the gospel, but you did not well to believe them, discommending the Homoousians: dost thou think me so very foolish, that without any reason at all, I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?" It were easy to put these words into the mouth of a Grecian, Abyssine, Georgian, or any other of any religion. And I pray, bethink yourselves what you would say in such a case, and imagine that we say the very same to you.

100. Whereas you ask—whether protestants do not perfectly resemble those men to whom St. Augustine spake, when they will have men to believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning Luther?—I demand again, whether you be well in your wits to say, that protestants would have men believe the Roman church delivering Scripture, whereas they accuse her to deliver many books for Scripture which are not so? And do not bid men to receive any book which she delivers, for that reason, because she delivers it; and, if you meant only, protestants will have men to believe some books to be Scripture which the Roman church delivers for such, may not we then ask as you do, Do not papists perfectly resemble these men, which will

have men believe the church of England delivering Scripture, but not to believe her condemning the church of Rome?

101. And whereas you say—St. Augustine may seem to have spoken prophetically against protestants, when he said, "Why should I not most diligently inquire what Christ commanded, of them before all others, by whose authority I was moved to believe, that Christ commanded any good thing?"—I answer, until you can shew, that protestants believe that Christ commanded any good thing, that is, that they believe the truth of Christian religion, upon the authority of the church of Rome, this place must be wholly impertinent to your purpose, which is to make protestants believe your church to be the infallible expounder of Scriptures and judge of controversies. Nay, rather, is it not directly against your purpose? For why may not a member of the church of England, who received his baptism, education, and faith, from the ministry of this church, say just so to you as St. Augustine here to the Manichees? Why should not I most diligently inquire what Christ commanded, of them (the church of England) before all others, by whose authority I was moved to believe, that Christ commanded any good thing? Can you F. or K. or whosoever you are, better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have been, or to be; if the belief thereof had been recommended by you to me? This therefore (that Christ Jesus did those miracles, and taught that doctrine, which is contained evidently in the undoubted books of the New Testament) I believed by fame, strengthened with celebrity and consent (even of those which

in other things are at infinite variance one with another); and lastly, by antiquity (which gives an universal and a constant attestation to them); but every one may see that you, so few (in comparison of all those upon whose consent we ground our belief of Scripture), so turbulent, that you damn all to the fire, and to hell, that any ways differ from you; that you profess it is lawful for you, to use violence and power whensoever you can have it, for the planting of your own doctrine, and extirpation of the contrary: lastly, so new in many of your doctrines, as in the lawfulness and expedience of debarring the laity of the sacramental cup, the lawfulness and expedience of your Latin service, transubstantiation, indulgences, purgatory, the pope's infallibility, his authority over kings, &c. So new, I say, in comparison of the undoubted books of Scripture, which evidently containeth, or rather is our religion, and the sole and adequate object of our faith: I say, every one may see that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing deserving authority (with wise and considerate men). What madness is this? Believe then the consent of Christians, which are now, and have been ever since Christ in the world, that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us what Christ said, which contradict and damn all other parts of Christendom. Why, I beseech you? Surely if they were not at all, and could not teach me any thing, I would more easily persuade myself, that I were not to believe in Christ, than that I should learn any thing concerning him, from any other, than them by whom I believed him; at least, than that I should learn what his religion was from you, who have wronged

so exceedingly his miracles and his doctrine, by forging so evidently so many false miracles for the confirmation of your new doctrine, which might give us just occasion, had we no other assurance of them but your authority, to suspect the true ones. Who, with forging so many false stories, and false authors, have taken a fair way to make the faith of all stories questionable, if we had no other ground for our belief of them but your authority; who have brought in doctrines plainly and directly contrary to that which you confess to be the word of Christ, and which, for the most part, make either for the honour or profit of the teachers of them; which (if there were no difference between the Christian and the Roman church) would be very apt to make suspicious men believe, that Christian religion was a human invention, taught by some cunning impostors, only to make themselves rich and powerful; who make a profession of corrupting all sorts of authors—a ready course to make it justly questionable, whether any remain uncorrupted. For if you take this authority upon you, upon the six ages last past, how shall we know, that the church of that time did not usurp the same authority upon the authors of the six last ages before them, and so upwards, until we come to Christ himself? Whose questioned doctrines, none of them came from the fountain of apostolic tradition, but have insinuated themselves into the streams, by little and little; some in one age, and some in another; some more anciently, some more safely; and some yet are embryos, yet hatching, and in the shell; as the pope's infallibility, the blessed Virgin's immaculate conception, the pope's power over the tem-

poralities of kings, the doctrine of predetermination, &c. all which yet are, or in time may be, imposed upon Christians under the title of original and apostolical tradition; and that with that necessity, that they are told, they were as good believe nothing at all, as not believe these things to have come from the apostles, which they know to have been brought in but yesterday, which whether it be not a ready and likely way to make men conclude thus with themselves:—I am told, that I were as good believe nothing at all, as believe some points which the church teacheth me, and not others; and some things which she teacheth to be ancient and certain, I plainly see to be new and false; therefore I will believe nothing at all.—Whether, I say, the aforesaid grounds be not a ready and likely way to make men conclude thus, and whether this conclusion be not too often made in Italy and Spain, and France, and in England too, I leave it to the judgment of those that have wisdom and experience. Seeing therefore the Roman church is so far from being a sufficient foundation for our belief in Christ, that it is in sundry regards a dangerous temptation against it; why should not I much rather conclude, seeing we receive not the knowledge of Christ and Scriptures from the church of Rome, neither from her must we take his doctrine, or the interpretation of Scripture.

102. Ad. §. 19. In this number, this argument is contained.—The judge of controversies ought to be intelligible to learned and unlearned: the Scripture is not so, and the church is so; therefore the church is the judge, and not the Scripture.—

ble is a condition requisite to a judge, so is not that alone sufficient to make a judge; otherwise you might make yourself judge of controversies, by arguing, the Scripture is not intelligible by all, but I am; therefore I am judge of controversies. If you say, your intent was to conclude against the Scripture, and not for the church: I demand why then, but to delude the simple with sophistry did you say in the close of this §.—Such is the church, and the Scripture is not such?—But that you would leave it to them, to infer in the end (which indeed was more than you undertook in the beginning); therefore the church is judge, and the Scripture not. I say, Secondly, That you still run upon a false supposition, that God hath appointed some judge of all controversies, that may happen among Christians about the sense of obscure texts of Scripture; whereas he hath left every one to his liberty herein, in those words of St. Paul—*Quisque abundet in sensu suo*, &c. I say, Thirdly, Whereas some protestants make the Scripture judge of controversies, that they have the authority of fathers to warrant their manner of speaking; as of Optatus.*

104. But, speaking truly and properly, the Scripture is not a judge, nor can be, but only a sufficient rule, for those to judge by, that believe it to be the word of God (as the church of England and the church of Rome both do) what they are to believe, and what they are not to believe. I say sufficiently perfect, and sufficiently intelligible, in things necessary, to all that have understanding, whether they be learned or unlearned. And my reason hereof is convincing and

demonstrative, because nothing is necessary to be believed, but what is plainly revealed. For to say, that when a place of Scripture, by reason of ambiguous terms lies indifferent between divers senses, whereof one is true, and the other is false, that God obliges men, under pain of damnation, not to mistake through error and human frailty, is to make God a tyrant; and to say, that he requires us certainly to attain that end, for the attaining whereof we have no certain means; which is to say, that, like Pharaoh, he gives no straw, and requires brick; that he reaps where he sows not; that he gathers where he strews not; that he will not be pleased with our utmost endeavours to please him, without full, and exact, and never-failing performance; that his will is, we should do what he knows we cannot do; that he will not accept of us, according to that which we have, but requireth of us what we have not. Which, whether it can consist with his goodness, with his wisdom, and with his word, I leave it to honest men to judge. If I should send a servant to Paris, or Rome, or Jerusalem, and he using his utmost diligence not to mistake his way, yet notwithstanding, meeting often with such places where the road is divided into several ways, whereof every one is as likely to be true, and as likely to be false, as any other, should at length mistake, and go out of the way, would not any man say, that I were an impotent, foolish, and unjust master, if I should be offended with him for so doing? and shall we not tremble to impute that to God, which we would take in foul scorn if it were imputed to ourselves? Certainly, I, for my part, fear I should not love God, if I should think so strangely of him.

105. Again, when you say—that unlearned and ignorant men cannot understand Scripture—I would desire you to come out of the clouds, and tell us what you mean: whether, that they cannot understand all Scripture, or that they cannot understand any Scripture, or that they cannot understand so much as is sufficient for their direction to heaven. If the first, I believe the learned are in the same case. If the second, every man's experience will confute you; for, who is there that is not capable of a sufficient understanding of the story, the precepts, the promises, and the threats of the gospel? If the third, that they may understand something, but not enough for their salvations: I ask you, First, Why then doth St. Paul say to Timothy, the Scriptures are able to make him wise unto salvation? Why doth St. Augustine say—*Ea quæ manifeste posita sunt in sacris Scripturis, omnia continent quæ pertinent ad fidem, moresque vivendi?* Why does every one of the four evangelists entitle their book, The Gospel, if any necessary and essential part of the gospel were left out of it? Can we imagine that either they omitted something necessary out of ignorance, not knowing it to be necessary? or, knowing it to be so, maliciously concealed it? or, out of negligence, did the work they have undertaken by halves? If none of these things can without blasphemy be imputed to them, considering they were assisted by the Holy Ghost in this work, then certainly it most evidently follows, that every one of them writ the whole gospel of Christ; I mean, all the essential and necessary parts of it. So that if we had no other book of Scripture, but one of them alone, we should not

want any thing necessary to salvation. And what one of them hath more than another, it is only profitable and not necessary: necessary indeed to be believed, because revealed; but not therefore revealed, because necessary to be believed.

106. Neither did they write only for the learned, but for all men. This being one special means of the preaching of the gospel, which was commanded to be preached, not only to learned men, but to all men. And therefore, unless we will imagine the Holy Ghost and them to have been wilfully wanting to their own desire and purpose, we must conceive, that they intended to speak plain, even to the capacity of the simplest; touching all things necessary to be published by them, and believed by us.

107. And whereas you pretend—it is so easy, and obvious both for the learned and the ignorant both to know, which is the church, and what are the decrees of the church, and what is the sense of the decrees; I say, this is a vain pretence.

108. For, First, How shall an unlearned man, whom you have supposed now ignorant of Scripture, how shall he know which of all the societies of Christians is indeed the church? You will say, perhaps—He must examine them by the notes of the church, which are perpetual visibility, succession, conformity with the ancient church, &c. But how shall he know, first, that these are the notes of the church, unless by Scripture, which, you say, he understands not? you may say, perhaps, he may be told so. But seeing men may deceive, and be deceived, and their words are no demonstrations, how shall he be assured, that what they say

is true? so that at the first he meets with an impregnable difficulty, and cannot know the church but by such notes, which whether they be the notes of the church he cannot possibly know. But let us suppose this isthmus digged through, and that he is assured these are the notes of the true church; how can he possibly be a competent judge, which society of Christians hath title to these notes, and which hath not? seeing this trial of necessity requires a great sufficiency of knowledge of the monuments of Christian antiquity, which no unlearned man can have, because he that hath it cannot be unlearned. As for example, how shall he possibly be able to know whether the church of Rome hath had a perpetual succession of visible professors, which held always the same doctrine which they now hold, without holding any thing to the contrary; unless he hath first examined, what was the doctrine of the church in the first age, what in the second, and so forth? And whether this be not a more difficult work, than to stay at the first age, and to examine the church by the conformity of her doctrine with the doctrine of the first age, every man of ordinary understanding may judge.

Let us imagine him advanced a step further, and to know which is the church; how shall he know what the church hath decreed, seeing the church hath not been so careful in keeping her decrees, but that many are lost, and many corrupted? Besides, when even the learned among you are not agreed concerning divers things, whether they be *de fide*, or not, how shall the unlearned do? Then for the sense of the decrees, how can he be more capable of the understanding

of them, than of plain texts of Scripture, which you will not suffer him to understand? especially seeing the decrees of divers popes and councils are conceived so obscurely, that the learned cannot agree about the sense of them: and then they are written all in such languages, which the ignorant understand not, and therefore must of necessity rely herein upon the uncertain and fallible authority of some particular men, who inform them, that there is such a decree. And if the decrees were translated into vulgar languages, why the translators should not be as fallible as you say the translators of Scripture are, who can possibly imagine?

109. Lastly, How shall an unlearned man, or indeed any man, be assured of the certainty of that decree, the certainty whereof depends upon suppositions, which are impossible to be known whether they be true or no? for it is not the decree of a council, unless it be confirmed by a true pope. Now the pope cannot be a true pope, if he came in by simony; which whether he did or no, who can answer me? he cannot be a true pope, unless he were baptized; and baptized he was not, unless the minister had due intention. So likewise he cannot be a true pope, unless he were rightly ordained priest, and that again depends upon the ordainer's secret intention, and also upon his having the episcopal character. All which things, as I have formerly proved, depend upon so many uncertain suppositions, that no human judgment can possibly be resolved in them. I conclude, therefore, that not the learnedest man amongst you all, no not the pope himself, can, according to the grounds you go upon, have any certainty, that

any decree of any council is good and valid, and consequently, not any assurance, that it is indeed the decree of a council.

110. Ad. §. 20. If by a private spirit, you mean a particular persuasion, that a doctrine is true, which some men pretend, but cannot prove to come from the Spirit of God: I say, to refer controversies to Scripture, is not to refer them to this kind of private spirit. For is there not a manifest difference between saying, the Spirit of God tells me, that this is the meaning of such a text (which no man can possibly know to be true, it being a secret thing) and between saying—these and these reasons I have to shew, that this or that doctrine, or that this or that is the meaning of such a Scripture? reason being a public and certain thing, and exposed to all men's trial and examination. But now, if by private spirit you understand every man's particular reason, then your first and second inconvenience will presently be reduced to one, and shortly to none at all.

111. Ad. §. 20. And does not also giving the office of judicature to the church, come to confer it upon every particular man? for, before any man believes the church infallible, must he not have reason to induce him to believe it to be so? and, must he not judge of those reasons, whether they be indeed good and firm, or captious and sophistical? or, would you have all men believe all your doctrine upon the church's infallibility, and the church's infallibility they know not why?

112. Secondly, Supposing they are to be guided by the church, they must use their own particular reason to find out which is the church. And, to that purpose, you yourselves give a great many

notes, which you pretend first to be certain notes of the church, and then to be peculiar to your church, and agreeable to none else; but you do not so much as pretend, that either of those pretences is evident of itself, and therefore you go about to prove them both by reasons; and those reasons, I hope, every particular man is to judge of, whether they do indeed conclude and convince that which they are alleged for; that is, that these marks are indeed certain notes of the church; and then, that your church hath them, and no other.

113. One of these notes, indeed the only note of a true and uncorrupted church, is conformity with antiquity; I mean, the most ancient church of all, that is, the primitive and apostolic. Now, how is it possible any man should examine your church by this note, but he must by his own particular judgment find out what was the doctrine of the primitive church, and what is the doctrine of the present church, and be able to answer all these arguments which are brought to prove repugnance between them? Otherwise, he shall but pretend to make use of this note for the finding the true church, but indeed make no use of it, but receive the church at a venture, as the most of you do, not one in a hundred being able to give any tolerable reason for it. So that instead of reducing men to particular reasons, you reduce them to none at all, but to chance, and passion, and prejudice, and such other ways, which if they lead one to the truth, they lead hundreds, nay thousands, to falsehood. But it is a pretty thing to consider, how these men can blow hot and cold out of the same mouth to serve several purposes. Is there hope of gaining a proselyte? Then they

will tell you—God hath given every man reason to follow; and "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch:" that it is no good reason for a man's religion, that he was born and brought up in it; for then a Turk should have as much reason to be a Turk, as a Christian to be a Christian: that every man hath a judgment of discretion; which, if they will make use of, they shall easily find, that the true church hath always such and such marks, and that their church hath them, and no others but theirs. But then, if any of theirs be persuaded to a sincere and sufficient trial of their church, even by their own notes of it, and to try whether they be indeed so conformable to antiquity as they pretend, then their note is changed. You must not use your own reason, nor your judgment, but refer all to the church, and believe her to be conformable to antiquity, though they have no reason for it; nay, though they have evident reason to the contrary. For my part, I am certain, that God hath given us our reason, to discern between truth and falsehood; and he that makes not this use of it, but believes things he knows not why; I say, it is by chance that he believes the truth, and not by choice; and that I cannot but fear, that God will not accept of this "sacrifice of fools."

114. But you that would not have men follow their reason, what would you have them follow? their passions? or pluck out their eyes, and go blindfold? No, you say, you would have them follow authority. On God's name let them; we also would have them follow authority; for it is upon the authority of universal tradition, that we would have them believe Scripture. But then, as

for the authority which you would have them follow, you will let them see reason why they should follow it. And is not this to go a little about? To leave reason for a short turn, and then to come to it again, and to do that which you condemn in others? It being indeed a plain impossibility for any man to submit his reason but to reason; for he that doth it to authority, must of necessity think himself to have greater reason to believe that authority. Therefore the confession cited by Breerly, you need not think to have been extorted from Luther and the rest. It came very freely from them, and what they say you practise as much as they.

115. And whereas you say, that—a protestant admits of fathers, councils, church, as far as they agree with Scripture, which upon the matter is himself:—I say, you admit neither of them, nor the Scripture itself, but only so far as it agrees with your church; and your church you admit, because you think you have reason to do so: so that by you as well as protestants all is finally resolved into your own reason.

116. Nor do heretics only, but Romish catholics also, set up as many judges as there are men and women in the Christian world. For do not your men and women judge your religion to be true, before they believe it, as well as the men and women of other religions? Oh, but you say—they receive it, not because they think it agreeable to Scripture, but because the church tells them so. But then, I hope they believe the church, because their own reason tells them they are to do so. So that the difference between a papist and a protestant is this: not that the one

udges, and the other does not judge, but that the one judges his guide to be infallible, the other his way to be manifest. This same pernicious doctrine is taught by Brentius, Zanchius, Cartwright, and others. It is so in very deed: but it is taught also by some others, whom you little think of. It is taught by St. Paul, where he says, "Try all things; hold fast that which is good." It is taught by St. John, in these words: "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God or no." It is taught by St. Peter, in these: "Be ye ready to render a reason of the hope that is in you." Lastly, this very pernicious doctrine is taught by our Saviour, in these words: "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch:" and, "Why of yourselves judge you not what is right?" All which speeches, if they do not advise men to make use of their reason for the choice of their religion, I must confess myself to understand nothing. Lastly, not to be infinite, it is taught by Mr. Knot himself, not in one page only, or chapter of his book, but all his book over; the very writing and publishing whereof supposes this for certain, that the readers are to be judges, whether his reasons, which he brings, be strong and convincing, of which sort we have hitherto met with none: or else captious, or impertinences, as indifferent men shall (as I suppose) have cause to judge them.

117. But you demand,—what good statesmen would they be, who should ideate, or fancy, such a commonwealth as these men have framed to themselves a church? Truly if this be all the fault they have, that they say, every man is to use his own judgment in the choice of his religion, and

not to believe this or that sense of Scripture, upon the bare authority of any learned man or men, when he conceives he hath reasons to the contrary which are of more weight than their authority; I know no reason but, notwithstanding all this, they might be as good statesmen as any of the society. But what hath this to do with commonwealths, where men are bound only to external obedience unto the laws and judgment of courts, but not to an internal approbation of them, no, nor to conceal their judgment of them, if they disapprove them? As, if I conceived I had reason to mislike the law of punishing simple theft with death, as Sir Thomas More did, I might profess lawfully my judgment; and represent my reasons to the king or commonwealth in a parliament, as Sir Thomas More did, without committing any fault or fearing any punishment.

118. To the place of St. Augustine wherewith this paragraph is concluded, I shall need give no other reply, but only to desire you to speak like an honest man, and to say, whether it be all one for a man to allow and disallow in every Scripture what he pleases? which is either to dash out of Scripture such texts or such chapters, because they cross his opinion: or to say (which is worse) though they be Scripture, they are not true? whether, I say, for a man thus to allow and disallow in Scripture what he pleases, be all one, and no greater fault, than to allow that sense of Scripture which he conceives to be true and genuine, and deduced out of the words, and to disallow the contrary? for God's sake, Sir, tell me plainly: in those texts of Scripture, which you allege for the infallibility of your church, do not you allow what

sense you think true, and disallow the contrary? and do you not this, by the direction of your private reason? if you do, why do you condemn it in others? if you do not, I pray you tell me, what direction you follow, or whether you follow none at all? If none at all, this is like drawing lots, or throwing the dice, for the choice of a religion: if any other, I beseech you tell me what it is. Perhaps you will say, the church's authority; and that will be to dance finely in a round, thus—to believe the church's infallible authority, because the Scriptures avouch it; and to believe, that Scriptures say and mean so, because they are so expounded by the church. Is not this for a father to beget his son, and the son to beget his father? For a foundation to support the house, and the house to support the foundation? Would not Campian have cried out at it, *Ecce quos gyros, quos Mæandros!* And to what end was this going about, when you might as well at first have concluded the church infallible, because she says so, as thus to put in Scripture for a mere stale, and to say the church is infallible, because the Scripture says so, and the Scripture means so, because the church says so, which is infallible? Is it not most evident therefore to every intelligent man, that you are enforced of necessity to do that yourself, which so tragically you declaim against in others? The church you say is infallible; I am very doubtful of it: how shall I know it? The Scripture, you say, affirms it, as in the 59th of Esay, "My Spirit that is in thee," &c. Well, I confess I find there these words, but I am still doubtful whether they be spoken of the church of Christ; and if they be, whether they mean as you pretend. You say, the

church says so, which is infallible. Yea, but that is the question, and therefore not to be begged, but proved: neither is it so evident, as to need no proof; otherwise, why brought you this text to prove it? Nor is it of such a strange quality, above all other propositions as to be able to prove itself. What then remains, but that you say, reasons drawn out of the circumstances of the text will evince, that this is the sense of it. Perhaps they will: but reasons cannot convince me, unless I judge of them by my reason; and for every man or woman to rely on that, in the choice of their religion, and in the interpreting of Scripture, you say is a horrible absurdity; and therefore must neither make use of your own in this matter, nor desire me to make use of it.

119. But universal tradition (you say, and so do I too) is of itself credible; and that hath, in all ages, taught the church's infallibility with full consent.—If it have, I am ready to believe it; but that it hath, I hope you would not have me take upon your word; for that were to build myself upon the church, and the church upon you. Let then the tradition appear; for a secret tradition is somewhat like a silent thunder. You will perhaps produce, for the confirmation of it, some sayings of some fathers, who in every age taught this doctrine (as Gualterius in his Chronology undertakes to do; but with so ill success, that I heard an able man of your religion profess, that in the first three centuries, there was not one authority pertinent): but how will you warrant that none of them teach the contrary? Again, how shall I be assured, that the places have indeed this sense in them, seeing there is not one father for

ve hundred years after Christ, that does say in plain terms, the church of Rome is infallible? What shall we believe your church, that this is their meaning? But this will be again to go into the circle, which made us giddy before; to prove this church infallible, because tradition says so; tradition to say so, because the fathers say so; the fathers to say so, because the church says so, which is infallible: yea, but reason will shew this to be the meaning of them. Yes, if we may use our reason, and rely upon it: otherwise, as light shews nothing to the blind, or to him that uses not his eyes, so reason cannot prove any thing to him, that either hath not, or useth not, his reason to judge of them.

120. Thus you have excluded yourself from all proof of your church's infallibility from Scripture or tradition: and if you fly, lastly, to reason itself for succour, may it not justly say to you as Jephthe said to his brethren, "Ye have cast me out, and banished me, and do you now come to me for succour?" But if there be no certainty in reason, how shall I be assured of the certainty of those which you allege for this purpose? Either I may judge of them, or not; if not, why do you propose them? If I may, why do you say I may not, and make it such a monstrous absurdity, that men in the choice of their religion should make use of their reason? which yet, without all question, none but unreasonable men can deny to have been the chiefest end why reason was given them.

121. Ad. §. 22. "A heretic he is (saith Dr. Potter) who opposeth any truth, which to be a Divine revelation he is convinced in conscience by any means whatsoever; be it by a preacher or lay-[illegible] by reading Scriptures, or hearing them

read." And from hence you infer, that he makes all these safe propounders of faith.—A most strange and illogical deduction! For, may not a private man by evident reason convince another man, that such or such a doctrine is Divine revelation; and yet though he be a true propounder in this point, yet propound another thing falsely, and without proof, and, consequently, not to be a safe propounder in every point? Your preachers in their sermons, do they not propose to men Divine revelations? and do they not sometimes convince men in conscience, by evident proof from Scripture, that the things they speak are Divine revelations? And whosoever, being thus convinced, should oppose this Divine revelation, should he not be a heretic, according to your own grounds, for calling God's own truth into question? And would you think yourself well dealt with, if I should collect from hence, that you make every preacher a safe, that is, infallible, propounder of faith? Be the means of proposal what it will, sufficient or insufficient, worthy of credit, or not worthy; though it were, if it were possible, the barking of a dog, or the chirping of a bird; or were it the discourse of the devil himself, yet if I be, I will not say convinced, but persuaded, though falsely, that it is a Divine revelation, and shall deny to believe it, I shall be a formal, though not a material, heretic. For he that believes, though falsely, any thing to be Divine revelation, and yet will not believe it to be true, must of necessity believe God to be false; which, according to your own doctrine, is the formality of a heretic.

122. And how it can be any way advantageous to civil government, that men without warrant

from God should usurp a tyranny over other men's consciences, and prescribe unto them, without reason, and sometimes against reason, what they shall believe, you must shew us plainer, if you desire we should believe. For to say—Verily I do not see but it must be so—is no good demonstration: for whereas you say—that a man may be a passionate and seditious creature;—from whence you would have us infer, that he may make use of his interpretation to satisfy his passion, and raise sedition: there were some colour in this consequence, if we (as you do) made private men infallible interpreters for others; for then indeed they might lead disciples after them, and use them as instruments for their vile purposes. But when we say, they can only interpret for themselves, what harm they can do by their passionate or seditious interpretations, but only endanger both their temporal and eternal happiness, I cannot imagine: for though we deny the pope or church of Rome to be an infallible judge, yet we do not deny, but that there are judges which may proceed with certainty enough against all seditious persons, such as draw men to disobedience, either against church or state, as well as against rebels, and traitors, and thieves, and murderers.

123. Ad. §. 23. The next §. in the beginning argues thus:—For many ages there was no Scripture in the world; and for many more there was none in many places of the world; yet man wanted not then and there some certain direction what to believe: therefore there was then an infallible judge.—Just as if I should say, York is not my way from Oxford to London, therefore Bristol

is: or a dog is not a horse, therefore he is a man: as if God had no other ways of revealing himself to men, but only by Scripture and an infallible church. *St. Chrysostom and Isidorus Pelusiota conceived, he might use other means. And St. Paul telleth us, that the γνωστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, "might be known by his works;" and that they had "the law written in their hearts." Either of these ways might make some faithful men, without either necessity of Scripture or church.

124. But Dr. Potter says, you say—"In the Jewish church there was a living judge, endowed with an absolute infallible direction in cases of moment; as all points belonging to Divine faith are." And where was that infallible direction in the Jewish church, when they should have received Christ for their Messias, and refused him? Or, perhaps this was not a case of moment. Dr. Potter indeed might say very well, not that the high priest was infallible (for certainly he was not); but that his determination was to be of necessity obeyed, though for the justice of it there was no necessity that it should be believed. Besides, it is one thing to say, that the living judge in the Jewish church had an infallible direction; another, that he was necessitated to follow this direction. This is the privilege which you challenge. But it is that, not this, which the Doctor attributes to the Jews. As a man may truly say, the wise men had an infallible direction to Christ, without saying or think-

* See Chrysost. Hom. 1. in Mat. Isidor. Pelus. l. 3. ep. 106; and also Basil in Psal. xxviii. and then you shall confess, that by other means besides these, God did communicate himself unto men, and made them receive and understand his law. See also, to the same purpose Heb. i. 1.

ing that they were constrained to follow it, and could not do otherwise.

125. But either the church retains still her infallibility, or it was divested of it upon the receiving of Holy Scripture, which is absurd:—an argument methinks like this: either you have horns, or you have lost them; but you never lost them, therefore you have them still. If you say you never had horns; so say I, for aught appears by your reasons, the church never had infallibility.

126. But some Scriptures were received in some places, and not in others: therefore if Scriptures were the judge of controversies, some churches had one judge, and some another.—And what great inconvenience is there in that, that one part of England should have one judge, and another another; especially seeing the books of Scripture, which were received by those that received fewest, had as much of the doctrine of Christianity in them, as they all had which were received by any; all the necessary parts of the gospel being contained in every one of the four gospels, as I have proved? So that they which had all the books of the New Testament, had nothing superfluous; for it was not superfluous, but profitable, that the same thing should be said divers times, and be testified by divers witnesses; and they, that had but one of the four gospels, wanted nothing necessary: and therefore it is vainly inferred by you, that —with months and years, as new canonical Scriptures grew to be published, the church altered her rule of faith, and judge of controversies.—

127. Heresies, you say, would arise after the apostles' time, and after the writing of Scriptures:

these cannot be discovered, condemned, and avoided, unless the church be infallible; therefore there must be a church infallible.—But I pray tell me, why cannot heresies be sufficiently discovered, condemned, and avoided, by them which believe Scripture to be the rule of faith? If Scripture be sufficient to inform us what is the faith, it must of necessity be also sufficient to teach us what is heresy; seeing heresy is nothing but a manifest deviation from, and an opposition to, the faith. That which is straight will plainly teach us what is crooked; and one contrary cannot but manifest the other. If any one should deny, that there is a God; that this God is omnipotent, omniscient, good, just, true, merciful, a rewarder of them that seek him, a punisher of them that obstinately offend him; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; that it is He, by obedience to whom men must look to be saved: if any man should deny either his birth, or passion, or resurrection, or ascension, or sitting at the right hand of God; his having all power given him in heaven and earth: that it is He whom God hath appointed to be judge of the quick and dead; that all men shall rise again at the last day; that they which believe and repent shall be saved; that they which do not believe and repent shall be damned: if a man should hold, that either the keeping of the Mosaical law is necessary to salvation; or that good works are not necessary to salvation: in a word, if any man should obstinately contradict the truth of any thing plainly delivered in Scripture, who does not see that every one, which believes the Scripture, hath a sufficient

means to discover, and condemn, and avoid that heresy without any need of an infallible guide? If you say, that—the obscure places of Scripture contain matters of faith—I answer, that it is a matter of faith to believe, that the sense of them, whatsoever it is, which was intended by God, is true; for he that doth not so, calls God's truth into question. But to believe this or that to be the true sense of them, or, to believe the true sense of them, and to avoid the false, is not necessary either to faith or salvation. For if God would have had his meaning in these places certainly known, how could it stand with his wisdom, to be so wanting to his own will and end, as to speak obscurely? Or, how can it consist with his justice, to require of men to know certainly the meaning of those words, which he himself hath not revealed? Suppose there were an absolute monarch, that, in his own absence from one of his kingdoms, had written laws for the government of it, some very plainly, and some very ambiguously, and obscurely, and his subjects should keep those that were plainly written with all exactness, and for those that were obscure, use their best diligence to find his meaning in them, and obey them according to the sense of them which they conceived; should this king either with justice or wisdom be offended with these subjects, if by reason of the obscurity of them they mistook the sense of them, and failed of performance, by reason of their error?

128. But it is more useful and fit (you say) for deciding of controversies, to have, besides an infallible rule to go by, a living infallible judge to determine them: and from hence you conclude,

that certainly there is such a judge.—But why then may not another say, that it is yet more useful, for many excellent purposes, that all the partiarchs should be infallible, than that the pope only should? Another, that it would be yet more useful, that all the archbishops of every province should be so, than that the patriarchs only should be so. Another, that it would be yet more useful, if all the bishops of every diocese were so. Another, that it would be yet more available, that all the parsons of every parish should be so. Another, that it would be yet more excellent, if all the fathers of families were so. And, lastly, another, that it were much more to be desired, that every man and every woman were so; just as much as the prevention of controversies is better than the decision of them; and the prevention of heresies better than the condemnation of them; and upon this ground conclude, by your own very consequence, that not only a general council, nor only the pope, but all the patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, pastors, fathers, nay, all the men in the world are infallible: if you say now, as I am sure you will, that this conclusion is most gross and absurd, against sense and experience, then must also the ground be false from which it evidently and undeniably follows, viz. That that course of dealing with men seems always more fit to Divine Providence, which seems most fit to human reason.

129. And so, likewise, that there should men succeed the apostles, which could shew themselves to be their successors, by doing of miracles, by speaking all kinds of languages, by delivering men to Satan as St. Paul did Hymenæus, and the incestuous Corinthian: it is manifest in

human reason, it were incomparably more fit and useful for the decision of controversies, than that the successor of the apostles should have none of these gifts, and for want of the signs of apostleship, be justly questionable, whether he be his successor or no: and will you now conclude, that the popes have the gift of doing miracles as well as the apostles had?

130. It were in all reason very useful and requisite that the pope should, by the assistance of God's Spirit, be freed from the vices and passions of men, lest otherwise, the authority given him for the good of the church, he might employ (as divers popes you well know have done) to the disturbance and oppression, and mischief of it. And will you conclude from hence, that popes are not subject to the sins and passions of other men? that there never have been ambitious, covetous, lustful, tyrannous popes?

131. Who sees not that for men's direction it were much more beneficial for the church, that infallibility should be settled in the pope's person, than in a general council; that so the means of deciding controversies might be speedy, easy, and perpetual; whereas that of general councils is not so. And will you hence infer, that not the church representative, but the pope, is indeed the infallible judge of controversies? Certainly, if you should, the Sorbonne doctors would not think this a good conclusion.

132. It had been very commodious (one would think) that seeing either God's pleasure was, the Scripture should be translated, or else in his Providence he knew it would be so, that he had appointed some men for this business, and by his

Spirit assisted them in it, that so we might have translations as authentical as the original; yet you see God did not think fit to do so.

133. It had been very commodious (one would think) that the Scripture should have been, at least for all things necessary, a rule, plain and perfect; and yet you say, it is both imperfect and obscure, even in things necessary.

134. It had been most requisite (one would think) that the copies of the Bibles should have been preserved free from variety of readings, which makes men very uncertain in many places, which is the word of God, and which is the error or presumption of man; and yet we see God hath not thought fit so to provide for us.

135. Who can conceive, but that an apostolic interpretation of all the difficult places of Scripture, would have been strangely beneficial to the church, especially there being such danger in mistaking the sense of them, as is by you pretended, and God in his providence foreseeing that the greatest part of Christians would not accept of the pope for the judge of controversies? And yet we see God hath not so ordered the matter.

136. Who doth not see, that supposing the bishop of Rome had been appointed head of the church, and judge of controversies, that it would have been infinitely beneficial to the church, perhaps as much as all the rest of the Bible, that in some book of Scripture, which was to be undoubtedly received, this one proposition had been set down in terms—The bishops of Rome shall be always monarchs of the church, and they either alone, or with their adherents, the guides of faith, and the judges of controversies that shall arise

amongst Christians?—This, if you deal ingenuously, you cannot but acknowledge; for then all true Christians would have submitted to him, as willingly as to Christ himself; neither needed you and your fellows have troubled yourself to invent so many sophisms for the proof of it. There would have been no more doubt of it among Christians, than there is of the nativity, passion, resurrection, or ascension of Christ. You were best now rub your forehead hard, and conclude upon us, that because this would have been so useful to have been done, therefore it is done. Or if you be (as I know you are) too ingenuous to say so, then must you acknowledge, that the ground of your argument, which is the very ground of all these absurdities, is most absurd; and that it is our duty to be humbly thankful for those sufficient, nay abundant, means of salvation, which God hath of his own goodness granted us; and not conclude he hath done that which he hath not done, because, forsooth, in our vain judgments, it seems convenient he should have done so.

137. But you demand—what repugnance there is between infallibility in the church, and existence of Scripture, that the production of the one must be the destruction of the other?—Out of which words I can frame no other argument for you than this: there is no repugnance between the Scriptures' existence and the church's infallibility; therefore the church is infallible. Which consequence will then be good, when you can shew, that nothing can be untrue, but that only which is impossible; that whatsoever may be done, that also is done. Which, if it were true, would conclude both you and me to be infallible,

as well as either your church or pope; inasmuch as there is no more repugnance between the Scripture's existence and our infallibility, than there is between theirs.

138. But if protestants will have the Scripture alone for their judge, let them first produce some Scripture, affirming that, by the entering thereof, infallibility went out of the church.—This argument, put in form, runs thus: no Scripture affirms that, by the entering thereof, infallibility went out of the church; therefore there is an infallible church; and therefore the Scripture alone is not judge, that is, the rule to judge by. But as no Scripture affirms that, by the entering of it, infallibility went out of the church; so neither do we, neither have we any need to do so. But we say, that it continued in the church, even together with the Scriptures, so long as Christ and his apostles were living, and then departed; God in his providence having provided a plain and infallible rule, to supply the defect of living and infallible guides. Certainly, if your cause were good, so great a wit as yours is, would devise better arguments to maintain it. We can shew no Scripture affirming infallibility to have gone out of the church; therefore it is infallible. Somewhat like his discourse that said, it could not be proved out of Scripture, that the King of Sweden was dead; therefore he is still living. Methinks, in all reason, you that challenge privileges, and exemption from the condition of men, which is to be subject to error; you that, by virtue of this privilege, usurp authority over men's consciences, should produce your letters patents from the King of heaven, and shew some express warrant for this authority you take upon

you; otherwise you know the rule is—*Ubi contrarium non manifeste probatur, presumitur pro libertate.*

139. But Dr. Potter may remember what himself teacheth, that the church is still endued with infallibility in points fundamental, and consequently, that infallibility in the church doth well agree with the truth, the sanctity, yea, with the sufficiency of Scripture, for all matters necessary to salvation.—Still your discourse is so far from hitting the white, that it roves quite beside the butt. You conclude, that the infallibility of the church may well agree with the truth, the sanctity, the sufficiency of Scripture. But what is this, but to abuse your reader with the proof of that which no man denies? The question is not, whether an infallible church might agree with Scripture; but whether there be an infallible church? *Jam dic, posthume, de tribus capellis.* Besides, you must know, there is a wide difference between being infallible in fundamentals, and being an infallible guide even in fundamentals. Dr. Potter says, that the church is the former, that is, there shall be some men in the world, while the world lasts, which err not in fundamentals; for otherwise there should be no church. For to say, the church, while it is the church, may err in fundamentals, implies a contradiction, and is all one as to say, the church, while it is the church, may not be the church. So that to say, that the church is infallible in fundamentals, signifies no more but this—there shall be a church in the world for ever. But we utterly deny the church to be the latter; for, to say so, were to oblige ourselves to find some certain society of men, of

whom we might be certain, that they neither do nor can err in fundamentals, nor in declaring what is fundamental, what is not fundamental: and, consequently, to make any church an infallible guide in fundamentals, would be to make it infallible in all things which she proposes and requires to be believed. This therefore we deny both to your and all other churches of any one denomination, as the Greek, the Roman, the Abyssine; that is, indeed, we deny it simply to any church: for no church can possibly be fit to be a guide, but only a church of some certain denomination: for otherwise no man can possibly know which is the true church, but by a pre-examination of the doctrine controverted, and that were not to be guided by the church to the true doctrine, but by the true doctrine to the church. Hereafter, therefore, when you hear protestants say, the church is infallible in fundamentals, you must not conceive them as if they meant as you do, that some society of Christians, which may be known by adhering to some one head, for example, the pope, or the bishop of Constantinople, is infallible in these things; but only thus, that true religion shall never be so far driven out of the world, but that it shall always, somewhere or other, some that believe and profess it, in all things necessary to salvation.

140. But, you would therefore gladly know out of what text he imagines that the church, by the coming of Scripture, was deprived of infallibility in some points, and not in others?—And I also would gladly know, why do you thus frame to yourself vain imaginations, and then father them upon others? We yield unto you, that there shall

be a church which never erreth in some points, because (as we conceive) God hath promised so much; but not that there shall be such a church, which doth or can err in no points, because we find not, that God hath promised such a church; and therefore may not promise such a one to ourselves. But, for the church's being deprived by the Scripture of infallibility in some points, and not in others, that is a wild notion of your own, which we have nothing to do with.

141. But he affirmeth, That the Jewish church retained infallibility in herself: and therefore it is unjustly and unworthily done of him to deprive the church of Christ of it.—That the Jews had sometimes an infallible miraculous direction from God in some cases of moment, he doth affirm, and had good warrant; but that the synagogue was absolutely infallible, he no where affirms; and therefore it is unjustly and unworthily done of you to obtrude it upon him. And, indeed, how can the infallibility of the synagogue be conceived, but only by settling it in the high priest, and the company adhering and subordinate unto him? And whether the high priest was infallible, when he believed not Christ to be the Messias, but condemned and excommunicated them that so professed, and caused him to be crucified for saying so, I leave it to Christians to judge. But then suppose God had been so pleased to do as he did not, to appoint the synagogue an infallible guide; could you by your rules of logic constrain him to appoint such an one to Christians also; or say unto him, that in wisdom he could not do otherwise? Vain man, that will be thus always tying God to your imaginations! It is well for us

that he leaves us not without directions to him; but if he will do this sometimes by living guides, sometimes by written rules, what is that to you? May not he do what he will with his own?

142. And whereas you say, for the further enforcing of this argument, that there is greater reason to think the church should be infallible than the synagogue; because to the synagogue all laws and ceremonies, &c. were more particularly and minutely delivered than in the New Testament is done, our Saviour leaving particulars to the determination of the church.—But I pray walk not thus in generality, but tell us what particulars? If you mean particular rites and ceremonies, and orders for government, we grant it, and you know we do so. Our Saviour only hath left a general injunction by St. Paul, "Let all things be done decently and in order." But what order is fittest, *i. e.* what time, what place, what manner, &c. is fittest? That he hath left to the discretion of the governors of the church. But if you mean, that he hath only concerning matters of faith, the subject in question, prescribed in general, that we are to hear the church, and left it to the church to determine what particulars we are to believe, the church being nothing else but an aggregation of believers: this in effect is to say, he hath left it to all believers to determine what particulars they are to believe. Besides, it is so apparently false, that I wonder how you could content yourself, or think we should be contented, with a bare saying, without any shew or pretence of proof.

143. As for Dr. Potter's objection against this argument—That as well as you might infer, that Christians must have all one king, because the

Jews had so.—For aught I can perceive, notwithstanding any thing answered by you, it may stand still in force; though the truth is, it is urged by him not against the infallibility, but the monarchy, of the church. For whereas you say, the disparity is very clear: he that should urge this argument for one monarch over the whole world, would say that this is to deny the conclusion, and reply unto you, that there is disparity as matters are now ordered, but that there should not be so: for that there was no more reason to believe that the ecclesiastical government of the Jews was a pattern for the ecclesiastical government of Christians, than the civil of the Jews for the civil of the Christians. He would tell you, that the church of Christ, and all Christian commonwealths and kingdoms, are one and the same thing: and therefore he sees no reason why the synagogue should be a type and figure of the church, and not of the commonwealth. He would tell you, that as the church succeeded the Jewish synagogue, so Christian princes should succeed the Jewish magistrates; that is, the temporal governors of the church should be Christians. He would tell you, that as the church is compared to a house, a kingdom, an army, a body, so all distinct kingdoms might and should be one army, one family, &c. and that it is not so, is the thing he complains of. And therefore you ought not to think it enough to say, it is not so; but you should shew why it should not be so; and why this argument will not follow—the Jews had one king, therefore all Christians ought to have; as well as this, the Jews had one high priest over them all, therefore all Christians ought also to have. He might tell you,

moreover, that the church may have one master, one general, one head, one king, and yet he not be the pope, but Christ. He might tell you, that you beg the question, in saying without proof that it is necessary to salvation, that all (whether Christians or churches) have recourse to one church, if you mean by one church, one particular church, which is to govern and direct all others: and that, unless you mean so, you say nothing to the purpose. And besides, he might tell you, and that very truly, that it may seem altogether as available for the temporal good of Christians to be under one temporal prince, or commonwealth, as for their salvation, to be subordinate to one visible head: I say, as necessary, both for the prevention of the effusion of the blood of Christians by Christians, and for the defence of Christendom from the hostile invasions of Turks and pagans. And from all this he might infer, that though now, by the fault of men, there were in several kingdoms several laws, governments, and powers; yet that it were much more expedient, that there were but one: nay, not only expedient, but necessary, if once your ground be settled for a general rule—that what kind of government the Jews had, that the Christians must have. And, if you limit the generality of this proposition, and frame the argument thus—what kind of ecclesiastical government the Jews had, that the Christians must have: but they were governed by one high priest, therefore these must be so: he will say, that the first proposition of this syllogism is altogether as doubtful as the conclusion; and therefore neither fit nor sufficient to prove it, until itself be proved. And then, besides that, there is as great reason to

believe this, that what kind of civil government the Jews had, that the Christians must have. And so Dr. Potter's objection remains still unanswered, that there is as much reason to conclude a necessity of one king over all Christian kingdoms, from the Jews having one king; as one bishop over all churches, from their being under one high priest.

144. Ad. §. 24. Neither is this discourse confirmed by *Irenæus at all, whether by this discourse you mean that immediately foregoing all the analogy between the church and the synagogue, to which this speech of Irenæus alleged by you is utterly and plainly impertinent; or whether by this discourse you mean (as I think you do) not your discourse, but your conclusion which you discourse on; that is, that your church is the infallible judge in controversies. For neither hath Irenæus one syllable to this purpose; neither can it be deduced out of what he says, with any colour of consequence. For, first in saying—what if the apostles had not left Scripture, ought we not to have followed the order of tradition? And in saying, that to this order many nations yield assent, who believe in Christ, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit of God, without letters or ink, and diligently keeping ancient tradition:—doth he not plainly shew, that the tradition he speaks of is nothing else but the very same that is written; nothing but to believe in Christ? To which, whether Scripture alone, to them that believe it, be not a sufficient guide, I leave it to you to judge. And are not his words just as if a man should say, If God had not given

us the light of the sun, we must have made use of candles and torches: if we had no eyes, we must have felt out our way: if we had no legs, we must have used crutches. And doth not this in effect import, that, while we have the sun we need no candles? While we have our eyes, we need not feel out our way? While we enjoy our legs, we need not crutches? And, by like reason, Irenæus in saying—If we had no Scripture, we must have followed tradition; and they that have none, do well to do so—doth he not plainly import, that to them that have Scripture and believe it, tradition is unnecessary? which could not be, if the Scripture did not contain evidently the whole tradition, which, whether Irenæus believed or no, these words of his may inform you—*Non enim per alios*, &c. we have received the disposition of our salvation from no others, but from them by whom the gospel came unto us. Which gospel truly the apostles first preached, and afterwards by the will of God delivered in writing to us, to be the pillar and foundation of our faith.—Upon which place Bellarmine's two observations, and his acknowledgment ensuing upon them, are very considerable; and, as I conceive, as home to my purpose as I could wish them. His first notandum is, that—in the Christian doctrine, some things are simply necessary for the salvation of all men; as the knowledge of the articles of the apostles' creed; and besides the knowledge of the ten commandments, and some of the sacraments. Other things are not so necessary, but that a man may be saved without the explicit knowledge, and belief, and profession of them.—His second note is, that—those things, which were simply necessary, the apo-

stles were wont to preach to all men; but of other things not all to all, but some things to all; to wit, those things which were profitable for all, other things only to prelates and priests.—These things premised, he acknowledgeth, that—all these things were written by the apostles which are necessary for all, and which they were wont to preach to all; but that other things were not all written; and therefore, when Irenæus says, that the apostles wrote what they preached in the world, it is true, (saith he) and not against tradition, because they preached not to the people all things, but only those things which are necessary and profitable for them.—

145. So that, at the most, you can infer from hence but only a suppositive necessity of having an infallible guide, and that grounded upon a false supposition, in case we had no Scripture; but an absolute necessity hereof, and to them who have and believe the Scripture, which is your assumption, cannot with any colour from hence be concluded, but rather the contrary.

146. Neither because (as he says) it was then easy to receive the truth from God's church; then in the age next after the apostles, then when all the ancient and apostolic churches were at an agreement about the fundamentals of faith: will it therefore follow, that now one thousand six hundred years after, when the ancient churches are divided almost into as many religions as there are churches, every one being the church to itself, and heretical to all other, that it is as easy, but extremely difficult, or rather impossible, to find the church first independently of the true doctrine, and then to find the truth by the church?

147. As for the last clause of the sentence it will not any whit advantage, but rather prejudice your assertion. Neither will I seek to avoid the pressure of it, by saying that he speaks of small questions, and therefore not of questions touching things necessary to salvation, which can hardly be called small questions; but I will favour you so far as to suppose, that saying this of small questions, it is probable he would have said it much more of the great; but I will answer that which is most certain and evident, and which I am confident you yourself, were you as impudent as I believe you modest, would not deny, that the ancient apostolic churches are not now as they were in Irenæus's time; then they were all at unity about matters of faith, which unity was a good assurance that what they so agreed in, came from some one common fountain, and that no other than of apostolic preaching. And this is the very ground of Tertullian's so often mistaken Prescription against Heretics: *Variasse debuerat error ecclesiarum; quod autem apud multos unum est, non est erratum sed traditum.* "If the churches had erred, they could not but have varied; but that which is among so many, came not by error, but tradition." But now the case is altered, and the mischief is, that these ancient churches are divided among themselves; and, if we have recourse to them, one of them will say, this is the way to heaven, another that. So that now in place of receiving from them certain and clear truths, we must expect nothing but certain and clear contradictions.

148. Neither will the apostles depositing with the church all things belonging to the truth, be any

proof that the church shall certainly keep this depositum entire and sincere, without adding to it, or taking from it; for this whole depositum was committed to every particular church, nay, to every particular man which the apostles converted. And yet no man I think will say that there was any certainty, that it should be kept whole and inviolate by every man, and every church. It is apparent out of Scripture it was committed to Timothy, and by him consigned to other faithful men; and yet St. Paul thought it not superfluous, earnestly to exhort him to the careful keeping of it: which exhortation you must grant had been vain and superfluous, if the not keeping had been impossible. And therefore though Irenæus says, the apostles fully deposited in the church all truth, yet he says not, neither can we infer from what he says, that the church should always infallibly keep this depositum entire, without the loss of any truth, and sincere, without the mixture of any falsehood.

149. Ad. §. 25. But you proceed and tell us—that besides all this, the doctrine of protestants is destructive of itself. For either they have certain and infallible means not to err in interpreting, or not. If not, Scripture to them cannot be a sufficient ground for infallible faith: if they have, and so cannot err in interpreting Scripture, then they are able with infallibility to hear and determine all controversies of faith; and so they may be, and are, judges of controversies, although they use the Scripture as a rule. And thus, against their own doctrine, they constitute another judge of controversies beside Scripture alone.—And may not we with as much reason substitute church

and papists instead of Scripture and protestants, and say unto you, besides all this, the doctrine of papists is destructive of itself? For either they have certain and infallible means not to err in the choice of the church, and interpreting her decrees, or they have not; if not, then the church to them cannot be a sufficient (but merely a fantastical) ground for infallible faith, nor a meet judge of controversies: (for unless I be infallibly sure, that the church is infallible, how can I be, upon her authority, infallibly sure that any thing she says is infallible?) if they have certain infallible means, and so cannot err in the choice of their church, and interpreting her decrees, then they are able with infallibility to hear, examine, and determine, all controversies of faith, although they pretend to make the church their guide. And thus, against their own doctrine, they constitute another judge of controversies besides the church alone. Nay, every one makes himself a chuser of his own religion, and of his own sense of the church's decrees, which very thing in protestants they so highly condemn; and so, in judging others, condemn themselves.

150. Neither in saying thus have I only cried quittance with you; but that you may see how much you are in my debt, I will shew unto you, that for your sophism against our way, I have given you a demonstration against yours. First, I say, your argument against us is a transparent fallacy. The first part of it lies thus: protestants have no means to interpret, without error, obscure and ambiguous places of Scripture; therefore plain places of Scripture cannot be to them a sufficient ground of faith. But though we pre-

tend not to certain means of not erring in interpreting all Scripture, particularly such places as are obscure and ambiguous, yet this, methinks, should be no impediment, but that we may have certain means of not erring in and about the sense of those places which are so plain and clear, that they need no interpreters; and in such we say our faith is contained. If you ask me how I can be sure that I know the true meaning of these places? I ask you again, can you be sure, that you understand what I, or any man else says? They that heard our Saviour and the apostles preach, could they have sufficient assurance, that they understood at any time what they would have them do? If not, to what end did they hear them? If they could, why may we not be as well assured that we understand sufficiently what we conceive plain in their writings?

151. Again, I pray tell us, whether you do certainly know the sense of these Scriptures, with which you pretend you are led to the knowledge of your church? If you do not, how know you that there is any church infallible, and that these are the notes of it, and that this is the church that hath these notes? If you do, then give us leave to have the same means, and the same abilities, to know other plain places, which you have to know these. For, if all Scripture be obscure, how come you to know the sense of these places? If some place of it be plain, why should we stay here?

152. And now to come to the other part of your dilemma. In saying, "If they have certain means, and so cannot err," methinks you forget yourself very much, and seem to make no difference between having certain means to do a thing, and the

actual doing of it. As if you should conclude, because all men have certain means of salvation, therefore all men certainly must be saved, and cannot do otherwise; as if, whosoever had a horse must presently get up and ride; whosoever had means to find out a way, could not neglect those means, and so mistake it. God be thanked, that we have sufficient means to be certain enough of the truth of our faith! But the privilege of not being in possibility of erring, that we challenge not, because we have as little reason as you to do so; and you have none at all. If you ask, seeing we may possibly err, how can we be assured we do not? I ask you again, seeing your eye-sight may deceive you, how can you be sure you see the sun when you do see it? Perhaps you may be in a dream, and perhaps you, and all the men in the world, have been so, when they thought they were awake, and then only awake, when they thought they dreamt. But this I am sure of, as sure as that God is good, that he will require no impossibilities of us; not an infallible, nor a certainly unerring belief, unless he hath given us certain means to avoid error; and, if we use those which we have, he will never require of us, that we use that which we have not.

153. Now from this mistaken ground, that it is all one to have means of avoiding error, and to be in no danger, nor possibility of error, you infer upon us an absurd conclusion—That we make ourselves able to determine controversies of faith without infallibility and judges of controversies.—For the latter part of this inference, we acknowledge and embrace it: we do make ourselves judges of controversies; that is, we do make use

of our own understanding in the choice of our religion. But this, if it be a crime, is common to us with you (as I have proved above); and the difference is, not that we are choosers, and you not choosers; but that we, as we conceive, choose wisely; but you, being wilfully blind, choose to follow those that are so too, not remembering what our Saviour hath told you, when "the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." But then again I must tell you, you have done ill to confound together judges and infallible judges; unless you will say, either that we have no judges in our courts of civil judicature, or that they are all infallible.

154. Thus have we cast off your dilemma, and broken both the horns of it. But now my retortion lies heavy upon you, and will not be turned off. For first you content not yourselves with a moral certainty of the things you believe, nor with such a degree of assurance of them, as is sufficient to produce obedience to the condition of the new covenant, which is all that we require. God's Spirit, if he please, may work more, a certainty of adherence beyond a certainty of evidence: but neither God doth, nor man may, require of us, as our duty, to give a greater assent to the conclusion, than the premises deserve; to build an infallible faith upon motives that are only highly credible, and not infallible, as it were a great and heavy building upon a foundation that hath not strength proportionable. But though God require not of us such unreasonable things, you do; and tell men they cannot be saved, unless they believe your proposals with an infallible faith. To which end they must believe also your pro-

pounder, your church, to be simply infallible. Now how is it possible for them to give a rational assent to the church's infallibility, unless they have some infallible means to know that she is infallible? Neither can they infallibly know the infallibility of this means, but by some other, and so on for ever; unless they can dig so deep as to come at length to the rock; that is, to settle all upon something evident of itself, which is not so much as pretended. But the last resolution of all is into motives, which indeed, upon examination, will scarce appear probable, but are not so much as vouched to be any more than very credible. For example, if I ask you, why you do believe transubstantiation? What can you answer, but because it is a revelation of the prime verity. I demand, again, how can you assure yourself or me of that, being ready to embrace it if it may appear to be so? And what can you say, but that you know it to be so, because the church says so, which is infallible? If I ask, what mean you by your church? You can tell me nothing but the company of Christians which adhere to the pope. I demand then, further, why should I believe this company to be the infallible propounder of Divine revelation? And then you tell me, that there are many motives to induce a man to this belief. But are these motives, lastly, infallible? No, say you, but very credible. Well, let them pass for such, because now we have not leisure to examine them. Yet methinks, seeing the motives to believe the church's infaliibility are only very credible, it should also be but as credible that your church is infallible; and as credible, and no more, perhaps somewhat less, that her proposals, particularly

transubstantiation, are Divine revelations. And methinks you should require only a moral and modest assent to them, and not a Divine, as you call it, and infallible faith. But then of these motives to the church's infallibility, I hope you will give us leave to consider, and judge, whether they be indeed motives, and sufficient; or whether they be not motives at all, or not sufficient; or whether these motives or inducements to your church be not impeached, and opposed with compulsives and enforcements from it; or, lastly, whether these motives, which you use, be not indeed only motives to Christianity, and not to popery; give me leave for distinction-sake to call your religion so. If we may not judge of these things, how can my judgment be moved with that which comes not within its cognizance? If I may, then at least I am to be a judge of all these controversies. 1. Whether every one of these motives be indeed a motive to any church? 2. If to some, whether to yours? 3. If to yours, whether sufficient, or insufficient? 4. Whether other societies have not as many, and as great motives, to draw me to them? 5. Whether I have not greater reason to believe you do err, than that you cannot? And now, Sir, I pray let me trouble you with a few more questions. Am I a sufficient judge of these controversies, or no? If of these, why shall I stay here, why not of others, why not of all? Nay, doth not the true examining of these few contain and lay upon me the examination of all? What other motives to your church have you, but your notes of it? Bellarmine gives some fourteen or fifteen. And one of these fifteen contains in it the examination of all controversies; and, not only so, but

of all uncontroverted doctrines. For how shall I, or can I, know the church of Rome's conformity with the ancient church, unless I know first what the ancient church did hold, and then what the church of Rome doth hold? And, lastly, whether they be conformable, or if in my judgment they seem not conformable, I am then to think the church of Rome not to be the church, for want of the note, which she pretends is proper and perpetual to it? So that, for aught I can see, judges we are, and must be of all sides, every one for himself, and God for us all.

155. Ad. §. 26. I answer—This assertion, that "Scripture alone is judge of all controversies in faith," if it be taken properly, is neither a fundamental nor unfundamental point of faith, nor no point of faith at all, but a plain falsehood. It is not a judge of controversies, but a rule to judge them by; and that not an absolutely perfect rule, but as perfect as a written rule can be; which must always need something else, which is either evidently true, or evidently credible, to give attestation to it, and that in this case is universal tradition. So that universal tradition is the rule to judge all controversies by. But then, because nothing besides Scripture comes to us with as full a stream of tradition as Scripture, Scripture alone, and no unwritten doctrine, nor no infallibility of any church, having attestation from tradition truly universal; for this reason we conceive, as the apostles' persons, while they were living, were the only judges of controversies, so their writings, now they are dead, are the only rule for us to judge them by; there being nothing unwritten, which can go in upon half so fair cards

for the title of apostolic tradition as these things, which by the confession of both sides are not so; I mean—the doctrine of the millenaries, and of the necessity of the eucharist for infants.

156. Yet when we say, the Scripture is the only rule to judge all controversies by; methinks you should easily conceive, that we would be understood of all those that are possible to be judged by Scripture, and of those that arise among such as believe the Scripture. For, if I had a controversy with an atheist, whether there was a God or no, I would not say, that the Scripture were a rule to judge this by; seeing that, doubting whether there be a God or no, he must needs doubt whether the Scripture be the word of God; or if he does not, he grants the question, and is not the man we speak of. So, likewise, if I had a controversy about the truth of Christ with a Jew, it would be vainly done of me, should I press him with the authority of the New Testament, which he believes not, till out of some principles, common to us both, I had persuaded him that it is the word of God. The New Testament, therefore, while he remains a Jew, would not be a fit rule to decide this controversy, inasmuch as that which is doubted of itself, is not fit to determine other doubts. So, likewise, if there were any that believed the Christian religion, and yet believed not the Bible to be the word of God, though they believed the matter of it to be true (which is no impossible supposition; for I may believe a book of St. Augustine's to contain nothing but the truth of God, and yet not to have been inspired by God himself); against such men therefore there were no disputing out of the Bible, because nothing in

question can be a proof to itself. When therefore we say, Scripture is a sufficient means to determine all controversies, we say not this either to atheists, Jews, Turks, or such Christians (if there be any such) as believe not Scripture to be the word of God: but among such men only, as are already agreed upon this, that "the Scripture is the word of God," we say, all controversies that arise about faith, are either not at all decidable, and consequently not necessary to be believed one way or other, or they may be determined by Scripture. In a word, that all things necessary to be believed are evidently contained in Scripture, and what is not there evidently contained, cannot be necessary to be believed. And our reason hereof is convincing, because nothing can challenge our belief, but what hath thus descended to us from Christ by original and universal tradition. Now nothing but Scripture hath thus descended to us, therefore nothing but Scripture can challenge our belief. Now then to come up closer to you, and to answer to your question, not as you put it, but as you should have put it: I say, that this position, "Scripture alone is the rule whereby they which believe it to be God's word, are to judge all controversies in faith," is no fundamental point, though not for your reasons: for, your first and strongest reason, you see, is plainly voided and cut off by my stating of the question as I have done, and supposing in it, that the parties at variance are agreed about this, that the Scripture is the word of God; and consequently that this is none of their controversies. To your second, that "controversies cannot be ended without some living authority;" we have said already,

that necessary controversies may be and are decided: and, if they be not ended, this is not through defect of the rule, but through the default of men. And, for those that cannot thus be ended, it is not necessary they should be ended: for, if God did require the ending of them, he would have provided some certain means for the ending of them. And to your third, I say, that your pretence of using these means is but hypocritical; for you use them with prejudice, and with a settled resolution not to believe any thing which these means happily may suggest into you, if it any way cross your preconceived persuasion of your church's infallibility. You give not yourselves liberty of judgment in the use of them, nor suffer yourselves to be led by them to the truth, to which they would lead you, would you but be as willing to believe this consequence—our church doth oppose Scripture, therefore it doth err, therefore it is not infallible; as you are resolute to believe this—the church is infallible, therefore it doth not err, and therefore it doth not oppose Scripture, though it seem to do so never so plainly.

157. You pray, but it is not that God would bring you to the true religion, but that he would confirm you in your own. You confer places, but it is that you may confirm, or colour over with plausible disguises your erroneous doctrines; not that you may judge of them, and forsake them, if there be reason for it. You consult the originals, but you regard them not when they make against your doctrine or translation.

158. You add, not only the authority, but the infallibility, not of God's church, but of the Roman, a very corrupt and degenerous part of it;

whereof Dr. Potter never confessed, that it cannot err damnably. And which being a company made up of particular men, can afford you no help, but the industry, learning, and wit of private men: and, that these helps may not help you out of your error, tell you, that you must make use of none of all these to discover any error in the church, but only to maintain her impossibility of erring. And, lastly, Dr. Potter assures himself, that your doctrines and practices are damnable enough in themselves; only he hopes (and *spes est rei incertæ nomen)* he hopes, I say, that the truths which you retain, especially the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ, will be as an antidote to you against the errors which you maintain; and that your superstruction may burn, yet they amongst you *qui sequuntur Absolonem in simplicitate cordis*, may be saved, "yet so as by fire." Yet his thinking so is no reason for you or me to think so, unless you suppose him infallible; and, if you do, why do you write against him?

159. Notwithstanding, though not for these reasons, yet for others, I conceive this doctrine not fundamental; because, if a man should believe Christian religion wholly, and entirely, and live according to it, such a man, though he should not know or not believe the Scripture to be a rule of faith, no, nor to be the word of God, my opinion is, he may be saved; and my reason is, because he performs the entire condition of the new covenant, which is, that we believe the matter of the gospel, and not that it is contained in these or these books. So that the books of Scripture are not so much the objects of our faith, as the instruments of conveying it to our understanding; and

not so much of the being of the Christian doctrine as requisite to the well-being of it. Irenæus tells us (as M. K. acknowledgeth) of some barbarous nations—that believed the doctrines of Christ, and yet believed not the Scripture to be the word of God; for they never heard of it, and faith comes by hearing.—But these barbarous people might be saved: therefore men might be saved without believing the Scripture to be the word of God; much more without believing it to be a rule, and a perfect rule of faith. Neither doubt I, but if the books of Scripture had been proposed to them by the other parts of the church, where they had been before received, and had been doubted of, or even rejected by those barbarous nations, but still by the bare belief and practice of Christianity they might be saved; God requiring of us, under pain of damnation, only to believe the verities therein contained, and not the Divine authority of the books wherein they are contained. Not but that it were now very strange and unreasonable, if a man should believe the matter of these books, and not the authority of the books: and therefore, if a man should profess the not-believing of these, I should have reason to fear he did not believe that. But there is not always an equal necessity for the belief of those things, for the belief whereof there is an equal reason. We have, I believe, as great reason to believe there was such a man as Henry the Eighth, King of England, as that Jesus Christ suffered under Pontius Pilate: yet this is necessary to be believed, and that is not so. So that if any man should doubt of or disbelieve that, it were most unreasonably done of him, yet it were no mortal sin,

nor no sin at all; God having no where commanded men under pain of damnation to believe all which reason induceth them to believe. Therefore as an executor, that should perform the whole will of the dead, should fully satisfy the law, though he did not believe that parchment to be his written will which indeed is so; so I believe, that he, who believes all the particular doctrines which integrate Christianity, and lives according to them, should be saved, though he neither believed nor knew that the gospels were written by the evangelists, or the epistles by the apostles.

160. This discourse, whether it be rational and concluding or no, I submit to better judgment; but sure I am, that the corollary, which you draw from this position, that this point is not fundamental, is very inconsequent; that is, that we are uncertain of the truth of it, because we say, the whole church, much more particular churches and private men, may err in points not fundamental. A pretty sophism, depending upon this principle, that whosoever possibly may err, he cannot be certain that he doth not err! And upon this ground, what shall hinder me from concluding, that seeing you also hold, that neither particular churches, nor private men, are infallible even in fundamentals, that even the fundamentals of Christianity remain to you uncertain? A judge may possibly err in judgment; can he therefore never have assurance that he hath judged right? A traveller may possibly mistake his way; must I therefore be doubtful whether I am in the right way from my hall to my chamber? Or can our London carrier have no certainty, in the middle of the day, when he is sober and in his wits, that he

is in the way to London? These you see are right worthy consequences, and yet they are as like your own, as an egg to an egg, or milk to milk.

161. And, for the self-same reason (you say) we are not certain, that the church is not judge of controversies.—But now this self-same appears to be no reason; and therefore, for all this, we may be certain enough that the church is no judge of controversies. The ground of this sophism is very like the former, viz. that we can be certain of the falsehood of no propositions, but those only which are damnable errors. But I pray, good Sir, give me your opinion of these: the snow is black, the fire is cold, that M. Knot is archbishop of Toledo, that the whole is not greater than a part of the whole, that twice two make not four: in your opinion, good Sir, are these damnable heresies, or, because they are not so, have we no certainty of the falsehood of them? I beseech you, Sir, to consider seriously, with what strange captions you have gone about to delude your king and your country; and if you be convinced they are so, give glory to God, and let the world know it by your deserting that religion, which stands upon such deceitful foundations.

162. Besides (you say) among public conclusions defended in Oxford the year 1663, to the questions, Whether the church have authority to determine controversies of faith? and to interpret Holy Scripture? The answer to both is affirmative.—But what now if I should tell you, that in the year 1632, among public conclusions defended in Doway, one was—that God predeterminates men to all their actions, good, bad, and indifferent? will you think yourself obliged to be of this opi-

nion? If you will, say so: if not, do as you would be done by. Again, methinks so subtil a man as you are, should easily apprehend a wide difference between authority to do a thing, and infallibility in doing it: and again, between a conditional infallibility, and an absolute. The former, the Doctor, together with the article of the church of England, attributeth to the church, nay to particular churches, and I subscribe to his opinion; that is, an authority of determining controversies of faith according to plain and evident Scripture and universal tradition, and infallibility, while they proceed according to this rule. As if there should arise an heretic, that should call in question Christ's passion and resurrection, the church had authority to decide this controversy, and infallible direction how to do it, and to excommunicate this man, if he should persist in error. I hope, you will not deny, but that the judges have authority to determine criminal and civil controversies; and yet I hope, you will not say, that they are absolutely infallible in their determinations: infallible while they proceed according to law, and if they do so; but not infallibly certain that they shall ever do so. But that the church should be infallibly assisted by God's Spirit to decide rightly all emergent controversies, even such as might be held diversely of divers men, *Salva compage fidei*, and that we might be absolutely certain that the church should never fail to decree the truth, whether she used means or no, whether she proceed according to her rule or not; or, lastly, that we might be absolutely certain, that she should never fail to proceed according to her rule, this the defender of these conclusions said

not: and therefore said no more to your purpose, than you have all this while—that is, just nothing.

163. Ad. §. 27. To the place of St. Augustine, alleged in this paragraph, I answer, first, that in many things you will not be tried by St. Augustine's judgment, nor submit to his authority; not concerning appeals to Rome; not concerning transubstantiation; not touching the use and worshipping of images; not concerning the state of saints' souls before the day of judgment; not touching the Virgin Mary's freedom from actual and original sin; not touching the necessity of the eucharist for infants; not touching the damning infants to hell that die without baptism; not touching the knowledge of saints departed; not touching purgatory; not touching the fallibility of councils, even general councils; not touching perfection and perspicuity in Scriptures in matter necessary to salvation; not touching auricular confession; not touching the half-communion; not touching prayers in an unknown tongue: in these things, I say, you will not stand to St. Augustine's judgment, and therefore can with no reason or equity require us to do so in this matter. To St. Augustine, in heat of disputation against the donatists, and ransacking all places for arguments against them, we oppose St. Augustine out of this heat, delivering the doctrine of Christianity calmly and moderately, where he says, *In iis quæ aperte posita sunt in sacris Scripturis, omnia ea reperiuntur quæ continent fidem, moresque vivendi.* 3. We say, he speaks not of the Roman, but the catholic church, of far greater extent, and therefore of far greater credit and authority than the Roman church. 4. He speaks of a point not ex-

pressed, but yet not contradicted by Scripture. 5. He says not, that Christ hath recommended the church to us for—an infallible definer of all emergent controversies, but for a credible witness of ancient tradition.—Whosoever therefore refuseth to follow the practice of the church (understand of all places and ages) though he be thought to resist our Saviour, what is that to us, who cast off no practices of the church, but such as are evidently post-nate to the time of the apostles, and plainly contrary to the practice of former and purer times. Lastly, it is evident, and even to impudence itself undeniable, that upon this ground, of believing all things taught by the present church as taught by Christ, error was held; for example, the necessity of the eucharist for infants, and that in St. Augustine's time, and that by St. Augustine himself: and therefore without controversy this is no certain ground for truth, which may support falsehood as well as truth.

164. To the argument wherewith you conclude, I answer, that though the visible church shall always without fail propose so much of God's revelation, as is sufficient to bring men to heaven, for otherwise it will not be the visible church; yet it may sometimes add to this revelation things superfluous, nay hurtful, nay, in themselves damnable, though not unpardonable; and sometimes take from it things very expedient and profitable: and therefore it is possible, without sin, to resist in some things the visible church of Christ. But you press us farther, and demand—what visible church was extant when Luther began, whether it were the Roman or protestant church?—As if, it must of necessity either be protestant or Roman,

or Roman of necessity, if it were not protestant. Yet this is the most usual fallacy of all your disputers, by some specious arguments to persuade weak men, that the church of protestants cannot be the true church; and thence to infer, that without doubt it must be the Roman. But why may not the Roman be content to be a part of it, and the Grecian another? And if one must be the whole, why not the Greek church as well as the Roman? there being not one note of your church which agrees not to her as well as to your own; unless it be, that she is poor and oppressed by the Turk, and you are in glory and splendour.

165. Neither is it so easy to be determined as you pretend—that Luther and other protestants opposed the whole visible church in matters of faith;—neither is it so evident, that—the visible church may not fall into such a state, wherein she may be justly opposed.—And, lastly, for calling the distinction of points into fundamental and not fundamental, an evasion, I believe you will find it easier to call it so than to prove it so. But that shall be the issue of the controversy in the next chapter.

CHAP. III.

That the distinction of points fundamental, and not fundamental, is neither pertinent nor true in our present controversy: and that the catholic visible church cannot err in either kind of the said points.

" THIS distinction is abused by protestants to many purposes of theirs; and therefore if it be either untrue or impertinent (as they understand, and apply it) the whole edifice built thereon must be ruinous and false. For if you object their bitter and continued discords in matters of faith, without any means of agreement—they instantly tell you (as Charity Mistaken plainly shews) that they differ only in points not fundamental. If you convince them, even by their own confessions, that the ancient fathers taught divers points held by the Roman church against protestants—they reply, that those fathers may nevertheless be saved, because those errors were not fundamental. If you will them to remember, that Christ must always have a visible church on earth, with administration of sacraments, and succession of pastors, and that when Luther appeared, there was no church distinct from the Roman, whose communion and doctrine Luther then forsook, and for that cause must be guilty of schism and heresy—they have an answer (such as it is) that the catholic church cannot perish, yet may err in points not fundamental, and therefore Luther and other protestants were obliged to forsake her for such errors,

under pain of damnation: as if, forsooth, it were damnable to hold an error not fundamental, nor damnable. If you wonder how they can teach, that both catholics and protestants may be saved in their several professions—they salve this contradiction, by saying, that we both agree in all fundamental points of faith, which is enough for salvation. And yet, which is prodigiously strange, they could never be induced to give a catalogue what points in particular be fundamental, but only by some general description, or by referring us to the Apostles' Creed, without determining what points therein be fundamental or not fundamental for the matter; and in what sense they be, or be not, such: and yet concerning the meaning of divers points contained in, or reduced to, the Creed, they differ both from us, and among themselves. And indeed it being impossible for them to exhibit any such catalogue, the said distinction of points, although it were pertinent and true, cannot serve them to any purpose, but still they must remain uncertain, whether or no they disagree from one another, from the ancient fathers, and from the catholic church, in points fundamental; which is to say, they have no certainty whether they enjoy the substance of Christian faith, without which they cannot hope to be saved. But of this more hereafter.

2. "And to the end, that what shall be said concerning this distinction may be better understood, we are to observe, that there be two precepts, which concern the virtue of faith, or our obligation to believe Divine truths. The one is by divines called affirmative, whereby we are obliged to have a positive explicit belief of some chief

articles of Christian faith; the other is termed negative, which strictly binds us not to disbelieve, that is, not to believe the contrary of one point sufficiently represented to our understandings, as revealed or spoken by Almighty God. The said affirmative precept (according to the nature of such commands) enjoins some act to be performed, but not at all times, nor doth it equally bind all sorts of persons, in respect of all objects to be believed. For *objects;* we grant that some are more necessary to be explicitly and severally believed than other; either because they are in themselves more great and weighty; or else in regard they instruct us in some necessary Christian duty towards God, ourselves, or our neighbour. For *persons;* no doubt but some are obliged to know distinctly more than others, by reason of their office, vocation, capacity, or the like. For *times;* we are not obliged to be still in act of exercising acts of faith, but according as several occasions permit or require. The second kind of precept, called negative, doth (according to the nature of all such commands) oblige universally all persons, in respect of all objects; and at all times, *semper et pro semper*, as divines speak. This general doctrine will be more clear by examples. I am not obliged to be always helping my neighbour, because the affirmative precept of charity bindeth only in some particular cases; but I am always bound, by a negative precept, never to do him any hurt, or wrong. I am not always bound to utter what I know to be true; yet I am obliged never to speak any one least untruth against my knowledge. And (to come to our present purpose) there is no affirmative pre-

cept, commanding us to be at all times actually believing any one or all articles of faith: but we are obliged never to exercise any act against any one truth, known to be revealed. All sorts of persons are not bound explicitly and distinctly to know all things testified by God either in Scripture, or otherwise; but every one is obliged not to believe the contrary of any one point known to be testified by God. For that were in fact to affirm, that God could be deceived, or would deceive; which were to overthrow the whole certainty of our faith wherein the thing most principal is not the point which we believe, which divines call the material object, but the chiefest is the motive for which we believe, to wit, Almighty God's infallible revelation, or authority, which they term the formal object of our faith. In two senses, therefore, and with a double relation, points of faith may be called fundamental, and necessary to salvation: the one is taken with reference to the affirmative precept, when the points are of such quality, that there is obligation to know and believe them explicitly and severally. In this sense we grant that there is difference betwixt points of faith, which Dr. Potter* to no purpose laboureth to prove against his adversary, who in express words doth grant and explicate† it. But the Doctor thought good to dissemble the matter, and not to say one pertinent word in defence of his distinction, as it was impugned by Charity Mistaken, and as it is wont to be applied by protestants. The other sense, according to which points of faith may be called fundamental, and necessary to

* Page 209. † Charity Mistaken, c. viii. p. 75.

salvation, with reference to the negative precept of faith, is such, that we cannot, without grievous sin, and forfeiture of salvation, disbelieve any one point, sufficiently propounded, as revealed by Almighty God. And in this sense we avouch, that there is no distinction in points of faith, as if to reject some must be damnable, and to reject others, equally proposed as God's word, might stand with salvation. Yea, the obligation of the negative precept is far more strict, than is that of the affirmative, which God freely imposed, and may freely release. But it is impossible, that he can dispense, or give leave to disbelieve, or deny what he affirmeth; and in this sense sin and damnation are more inseparable from error in points not fundamental, than from ignorance in articles fundamental. All this I shew by an example, which I wish to be particularly noted for the present, and for divers other occasions hereafter. The Creed of the apostles contains divers fundamental points of faith, as the Deity, trinity of persons, the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of our Saviour Christ, &c. It contains also some points, for their matter and nature in themselves not fundamental; as under what judge our Saviour suffered; that he was buried; the circumstance of the time of his resurrection the third day, &c. But yet nevertheless whosoever once knows that these points are contained in the Apostles' Creed, the denial of them is damnable, and is in that sense a fundamental error: and this is the precise point of the present question.

3. "And all that hitherto hath been said, is so manifestly true, that no protestant or Christian, if he do but understand the terms, and state of the

question, can possibly deny it: insomuch, as I am amazed that men, who otherwise were endued with excellent wits, should so enslave themselves to their predecessors in protestantism, as still to harp on this distinction, and never regard how impertinently and untruly it was employed by them at first, to make all protestants seem to be of one faith, because, forsooth, they agree in fundamental points. For the difference against protestants consists not in that some believe some points, of which others are ignorant, or not bound expressly to know (as the distinction ought to be applied); but that some of them disbelieve, and directly, wittingly, and willingly oppose what others do believe to be testified by the word of God, wherein there is no difference between points fundamental and not fundamental; because, till points fundamental be sufficiently proposed as revealed by God, it is not against faith to reject them; or rather, without sufficient proposition, it is not possible prudently to believe them; and the like is of points not fundamental, which, as soon as they come to be sufficiently propounded as Divine truths, they can no more be denied than points fundamental propounded after the same manner: neither will it avail them to their other end, that for preservation of the church in being, it is sufficient that she doth not err in points fundamental. For if, in the mean time, she maintain any one error against God's revelation, be the thing in itself never so small, her error is damnable, and destructive of salvation.

4. "But Dr. Potter, forgetting to what purpose protestants make use of their distinction, doth fi-

nally overthrow it, and yields to as much as we can desire. For, speaking of that measure* and quantity of faith, without which none can be saved, he saith, 'It is enough to b lieve some things by a virtual faith, or by a general, and as it were a negative faith, whereby they are not denied or contradicted.' Now our question is, in case that Divine truths, although not fundamental, be denied and contradicted; and therefore, even according to him, all such denial excludes salvation. After he speaks more plainly. 'It is true (saith he) whatsoever† is revealed in Scripture, or propounded by the church out of Scripture, is in some sense fundamental, in regard of the Divine authority of God, and his word, by which it is recommended; that is, such as may not be denied or contradicted without infidelity; such as every Christian is bound, with humility and reverence, to believe, whensoever the knowledge thereof is offered to him. And, further, where‡ the revealed will or word of God is sufficiently propounded; there he that opposeth is convinced of error, and he, who is thus convinced, is a heretic, and heresy is a work of the flesh which excludeth from heaven: (Gal. v. 20, 21.) and hence it followeth, that it is fundamental to a Christian's faith, and necessary for his salvation, that he believe all revealed truths of God, whereof he may be convinced, that they are from God.' Can any thing be spoken more clearly or directly for us, that it is a fundamental error to deny any one point, though never so small, if once it be sufficiently propounded as a Divine truth, and that there is, in

* Page 211. † Page 212. ‡ Page 250.

this sense, no distinction betwixt points fundamental and not fundamental? And if any should chance to imagine, that it is against the foundation of faith not to believe points fundamental, although they be not sufficiently propounded, Dr. Potter doth not admit of this difference* betwixt points fundamental and not fundamental: for he teacheth, that sufficient proposition of revealed truth is required before a man can be convinced; and, for want of sufficient conviction, he excuseth the disciples from heresy, although they believed not our Saviour's resurrection,† which is a very fundamental point of faith. Thus, then, I argue out of Dr. Potter's own confession: no error is damnable, unless the contrary truth be sufficiently propounded as revealed by God: every error is damnable, if the contrary truth be sufficiently propounded as revealed by God: therefore all errors are alike for the general effect of damnation, if the difference arise not from the manner of being propounded. And what now is become of their distinction?

5. "I will therefore conclude with this argument: according to all philosophy and divinity, the unity and distinction of every thing followeth the nature and essence thereof; and therefore, if the nature and being of faith be not taken from the matter which a man believes, but from the motive for which he believes (which is God's word or revelation) we must likewise affirm, that the unity and diversity of faith must be measured by God's revelation (which is alike for all objects) and not by the smallness or greatness of the mat-

* Page 216. † Ibid.

ter which we believe. Now, that the nature of faith is not taken from the greatness or smallness of the things believed, is manifest; because, otherwise, one who believes only fundamental points, and another, who, together with them, doth also believe points not fundamental, should have faith of different natures; yea, there should be as many differences of faith, as there are different points which men believe, according to different capacities or instructions, &c. all which consequences are absurd, and therefore we must say, that unity in faith doth not depend upon points fundamental, or not fundamental, but upon God's revelation equally or unequally proposed; and protestants, pretending an unity only by reason of their agreement in fundamental points, do indeed induce as great a multiplicity of faith as there is multitude of different objects which are revealed by them; and since they disagree in things equally revealed by Almighty God, it is evident that they forsake the very formal motive of faith, which is God's revelation, and consequently lose all faith and unity therein.

6. "The first part of the title of this chapter—That the distinction of points fundamental, and not fundamental, in the sense of protestants, is both impertinent and untrue, being demonstrated; let us now come to the second:—that the church is infallible in all her definitions, whether they concern points fundamental, or not fundamental. And this I prove by these reasons.

7 "It hath been shewed in the precedent chapter, that the church is judge of controversies in religion; which she could not be, if she could err in any one point; as Dr. Potter would not

deny, if he were once persuaded that she is judge: because, if she could err in some points, we could not rely upon her authority and judgment in any one thing.

8. "This same is proved by the reason we alleged before; that seeing the church was infallible in all her definitions before Scripture was written (unless we will take away all certainty of faith for that time) we cannot with any shew of reason affirm, that she hath been deprived thereof by the adjoined comfort and help of Sacred Writ.

9. "Moreover, to say that the catholic church may propose any false doctrine, maketh her liable to damnable sin and error; and yet Dr. Potter teacheth, that the church cannot err damnably. For, if in that kind of oath which divines call *assertorium*, wherein God is called to witness, every falsehood is a deadly sin in any private person whatsoever, although the thing be of itself neither material nor prejudicial to any; because the quantity or greatness of that sin is not measured so much by the thing which is affirmed, as by the manner and authority whereby it is avouched, and by the injury that is offered to Almighty God, in applying his testimony to a falsehood: in which respect it is the unanimous consent of all divines, that in such kind of oaths, no *levitas materiæ;* that is, smallness of matter, can excuse from a mortal sacrilege against the moral virtue of religion, which respects worship due to God: if, I say, every least falsehood be deadly sin in the aforesaid kind of oath, much more pernicious a sin must it be in the public person of the catholic church to propound untrue articles of faith, thereby fastening God's prime verity to falsehood, and inducing and

obliging the world to do the same. Besides, according to the doctrine of all divines, it is not only injurious to God's eternal verity, to disbelieve things by him revealed, but also to propose as revealed truths things not revealed; as, in commonwealths, it is a heinous offence to coin either by counterfeiting the metal or the stamp, or to apply the king's seal to a writing counterfeited, although the contents were supposed to be true. And whereas to shew the detestable sin of such pernicious fictions, the church doth most exemplarily punish all broachers of feigned revelations, visions, miracles, prophecies, &c. as in particular appeareth in the council of Lateran,* excommunicating such persons; if the church herself could propose false revelations, she herself should have been the first and chiefest deserver to have been censured, and as it were excommunicated by herself. For as the Holy Ghost saith in Job,† 'Doth God need your lie, that for him you may speak deceits?' And that of the Apocalypse is most truly verified in fictitious revelations: 'If any‡ shall add to these things, God will add unto him the plagues which are written in this book.' And Dr. Potter saith, 'to add§ to it (speaking of the Creed) is high presumption, almost as great as to detract from it.' And therefore, to say the church may add false revelations, is to accuse her of high presumption, and of pernicious error, excluding salvation.

10. "Perhaps some will here reply, that although the church may err, yet it is not imputed

* Sub Leon. 10. Sess. 11.
† Cap. xiii. v. 7.
‡ Cap. ult. v. 18.
§ Page 999.

to her for sin, by reason she doth not err upon malice or wittingly, but by ignorance or mistake.

11. "But it is easily demonstrated, that this excuse cannot serve: for if the church be assisted only for points fundamental, she cannot but know, that she may err in points not fundamental, at least she cannot be certain that she cannot err, and therefore cannot be excused from headlong and pernicious temerity, in proposing points not fundamental to be believed by Christians as matters of faith, wherein she can have no certainty, yea, which always imply a falsehood: for although the thing might chance to be true, and perhaps all revealed, yet for the matter, she, for her part, doth always expose herself to danger of falsehood and error, and in fact doth always err in the manner in which she doth propound any matter not fundamental; because she proposeth it as a point of faith certainly true, which yet is always uncertain, if she in such things may be deceived.

12. "Besides, if the church may err in points not fundamental, she may err in proposing some Scripture for canonical, which is not such; or else err in keeping and conserving from corruptions such Scriptures as are already believed to be canonical. For I will suppose, that, in such apocryphal Scripture as she delivers, there is no fundamental error against faith, or that there is no falsehood at all, but only want of Divine testification: in which case, Dr. Potter must either grant, that it is a fundamental error to apply Divine revelation to any point not revealed, or else must yield, that the church may err in her proposition or custody of the canon of Scripture: and so we cannot be sure, whether she hath not been

deceived already in books recommended by her, and accepted by Christians. And thus we shall have no certainty of Scripture, if the church want certainty in all her definitions: and it is worthy to be observed, that some books of Scripture, which were not always known to be canonical, have been afterwards received for such; but never any one book or syllable, defined by the church to be canonical, was afterward questioned, or rejected for apocryphal: a sign that God's church is infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost, never to propose as Divine truth any thing not revealed by God; and, that omission to define points not sufficiently discussed is laudable; but commission in propounding things not revealed, inexcusable: into which precipitation our Saviour Christ never hath, nor never will, permit his church to fall.

13. " Nay, to limit the general promises of our Saviour Christ made to his church to points only fundamental; namely, that the 'gates* of hell shall not prevail against her:' and that 'the Holy Ghost† shall lead her into all truth,' &c. is to destroy all faith. For we may, by that doctrine and manner of interpreting the Scripture, limit the infallibility of the apostles' words, and preaching, only to points fundamental: and whatsoever general texts of Scripture shall be alleged for their infallibility, they may, by Dr. Potter's example, be explicated, and restrained to points fundamental. By the same reason it may be further affirmed, that the apostles, and other writers of canonical Scripture, were endued with infallibility, only in setting down points fundamental. For if it be urged,

* Matt. xvi. 18. † John xvi. 13.

that, all Scripture is divinely inspired; that it is the word of God, &c. Dr. Potter hath afforded you a ready answer, to say that Scripture is inspired, &c. only in those parts, or parcels, wherein it delivereth fundamental points. In this manner, Dr. Fotherby saith, 'The apostle* twice in one chapter professed, that this he speaketh, and not the Lord: he is very well content, that where he wants the warrant of the express word of God, that part of his writings should be esteemed as the word of man.' Dr. Potter also speaks very dangerously towards this purpose, §. 5. where he endeavoureth to prove, that the infallibility of the church is limited to points fundamental, because 'as nature, so God is neither defective in† necessaries, nor lavish in superfluities.' Which reason doth likewise prove, that the infallibility of Scripture, and of the apostles, must be restrained to points necessary to salvation, that so God be not accused 'as defective in necessaries, or lavish in superfluities.' In the same place he hath a discourse much tending to this purpose; where, speaking of these words, 'The Spirit shall lead you into all truth, and shall abide with‡ you for ever,' he saith, 'though that promise was§ directly and primarily made to the apostles (who had the Spirit's guidance in a more high and absolute manner than any since them) yet it was made to them for the behoof of the church, and is verified in the church universal. But all truth is not simply all, but all of some kind. To be led into all truths, is to know and believe them. And who is

* In his Sermons. Serm. II. page 50.
† Page 150.
‡ John xvi. 13; xiv. 16.
§ Page 151, 152.

so simple, as to be ignorant that there are many millions of truths (in nature, history, divinity) whereof the church is simply ignorant? How many truths lie unrevealed in the infinite treasure of God's wisdom, wherewith the church is not acquainted, &c. So then the truth itself enforceth us to understand by (all truths) not simply all, not all which God can possibly reveal, but all pertaining to the substance of faith, all truth absolutely necessary to salvation.' Mark what he saith: 'that promise—(the Spirit shall lead you into all truths) was made directly to the apostles, and is verified in the universal church; but by all truth is not understood simply all, but all appertaining to the substance of faith, and absolutely necessary to salvation.' Doth it not hence follow, that the promise made to the apostles, of being led into all truth, is to be understood only of all truth absolutely necessary to salvation; and consequently their preaching and writing were not infallible in points not fundamental? Or, if the apostles were infallible in all things which they proposed as Divine truth, the like must be affirmed of the church, because Dr. Potter teacheth the said promise to be verified in the church. And as he limits the aforesaid works to points fundamental, so may he restrain what other text soever that can be brought for the universal infallibility of the apostles or Scriptures; so he may, and so he must, lest otherwise he receive this answer of his own from himself: 'How many truths lie unrevealed in the infinite treasure of God's wisdom, wherewith the church is not acquainted?' And therefore, to verify such general sayings, they must be understood of truths absolutely necessary

to salvation. Are not these fearful consequences! And yet Dr. Potter will never be able to avoid them, till he come to acknowledge the infallibility of the church in all points by her proposed as Divine truths: and thus it is universally true, that she is led into all truth, in regard, that our Saviour never permits her to define or teach any falsehood.

14. "All, that with any colour may be replied to this argument, is—that if once we call any one book, or parcel of Scripture in question, although for the matter it contains no fundamental error, yet it is of great importance, and fundamental, by reason of the consequence; because, if once we doubt of one book received for canonical, the whole canon is made doubtful and uncertain, and therefore the infallibility of Scripture must be universal, and not confined within compass of points fundamental.

15. "I answer: for the thing itself it is very true, that if I doubt of any one parcel of Scripture received for such, I may doubt of all: and thence, by the same parity, I infer, that if we doubt of the church's infallibility in some points, we could not believe her in any one, and, consequently, not in propounding canonical books, or any other points fundamental, or not fundamental; which thing being most absurd, and withal most impious, we must take away the ground thereof, and believe that she cannot err in any point great or small: and so this reply doth much more strengthen what we intend to prove. Yet I add, that protestants cannot make use of this reply with any good coherence to this their distinction, and some other doctrines which they defend. For, if Dr. Potter can tell what points in particular be fun-

damental (as in his 7th §. he pretendeth) then he might be sure, that whensoever he meets with such points in Scripture, in them it is infallibly true, although it may err in others; and not only true, but clear, because protestants teach that in matters necessary to salvation the Scripture is so clear, that all such necessary truths are either manifestly contained therein, or may be clearly deduced from it. Which doctrines being put together, to wit, that Scripture cannot err in points fundamental; that they clearly contain all such points, and that they can tell what points in particular be such, I mean fundamental—it is manifest, that it is sufficient for salvation, that Scripture be infallible only in points fundamental: for supposing these doctrines of theirs be true, they may be sure to find in Scripture all points necessary to salvation, although it were fallible in other points of less moment: neither will they be able to avoid this impiety against Holy Scripture, till they renounce their other doctrines, and, in particular, till they believe that Christ's promises to his church are not limited to points fundamental.

16. " Besides, from the fallibility of Christ's catholic church in some points, it followeth, that no true protestants, learned or unlearned, doth or can with assurance believe the universal church in any one point of doctrine: not in points of lesser moment, which they call not fundamental, because they believe that in such points she may err: not in fundamental, because they must know what points be fundamental, before they go to learn of her, lest otherwise they be rather deluded than instructed, in regard, that her certain and infallible direction extends only to points fundamental

Now, if before they address themselves to the church, they must know what points are fundamental, they learn not of her, but will be as fit to teach, as to be taught by her: how then are all Christians so often, so seriously, upon so dreadful menaces, by fathers, Scriptures, and our blessed Saviour himself, counselled and commanded to seek, to hear, to obey the church? St. Augustine was of a very different mind from protestants: 'If (saith he) the* church through the whole world practise any of these things; to dispute whether that ought to be so done, is a most insolent madness.' And in another place he saith, 'That which the† whole church holds, and is not ordained by councils, but hath always been kept, is most rightly believed to be delivered by apostolical authority.' The same holy father teacheth, that the custom of baptizing children cannot be proved by Scripture alone, and yet that it is to be believed, as derived from the apostles. 'The custom of our mother, the‡ church (saith he), in baptizing infants, is in nowise to be condemned, nor to be accounted superfluous, nor is it at all to be believed, unless it were an apostolical tradition.' And elsewhere: 'Christ§ is of profit to children baptized: is he therefore of profit to persons not believing? But, God forbid that I should say, infants do not believe. I have already said, he believes in another, who sinned in another. It is said he believes, and it is of force, and he is reckoned among the faithful that are baptized. This

is the authority our mother the church hath; against this strength, against this invincible wall, whosoever rusheth shall be crushed in pieces.' To this argument the protestants, in the conference at Ratisbon, gave this round answer:—*Nos ab Augustino* hac in parte libere dissentimus:* 'in this we plainly disagree from Augustine.' Now, if this doctrine of baptizing infants be not fundamental in Dr. Potter's sense, then, according to St. Augustine, the infallibility of the church extends to points not fundamental. But if, on the other side, it be a fundamental point; then, according to the same holy doctor, we must rely upon the authority of the church for some fundamental point not contained in Scripture, but delivered by tradition. The like argument I frame out of the same father, about the not rebaptizing of those who were baptized by heretics, whereof he excellently, to our present purpose, speaketh in this manner: 'We follow,† indeed, in this matter even the most certain authority of canonical Scripture.' But, how? consider his words: 'Although verily there be brought no example for this point out of the canonical Scriptures, yet even in this point the truth of the same Scripture is held by us, while we do that which the authority of Scriptures doth recommend; that so, because the Holy Scripture cannot deceive us, whosoever is afraid to be deceived by the obscurity of this question, must have recourse to the same church concerning it, which, without any ambiguity, the Holy Scripture doth demonstrate to us.'

* See Protocol Monach. edit. 2. p. 367.

† Lib. i. cont. Crescon. cap. xxxii. xxxiii.

Among many other points in the aforesaid words, we are to observe, that, according to this holy father, when we prove some points, not particularly contained in Scripture, by the authority of the church; even in that case we ought not to be said to believe such points without Scripture, because Scripture itself recommends the church; and therefore, relying on her, we rely on Scripture, without danger of being deceived by the obscurity of any question defined by the church. And elsewhere he saith: 'Seeing this is* written in no scripture, we must believe the testimony of the church, which Christ declareth to speak the truth.' But, it seems, Dr. Potter is of opinion, that this doctrine about not rebaptizing such as were baptized by heretics, is no necessary point of faith, nor the contrary an heresy: wherein he contradicteth St. Augustine, from whom we have now heard, that what the church teacheth, is truly said to be taught by Scripture; and consequently to deny this particular point, delivered by the church, is to oppose Scripture itself. Yet, if he will needs hold, that this point is not fundamental, we must conclude out of St. Augustine (as we did concerning the baptizing of children), that the infallibility of the church reacheth to points not fundamental. The same father, in another place, concerning this very question of the validity of baptism conferred by heretics, saith: 'The† apostles indeed have prescribed nothing of this; but this custom ought to be believed to be originally taken from their tradition, as there are many things that the universal church observ-

eth, which are therefore with good reason believed to have been commanded by the apostles, although they be not written.' No less clear is St. Chrysostome for the infallibility of the traditions of the church. For, treating on these words, (2 Thess. ii.) 'Stand, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by speech or by our epistle,' he saith: 'Hence it is* manifest, that they delivered not all things by letter, but many things also without writing, and these also are worthy of belief. Let us therefore account the tradition of the church to be worthy of belief: it is a tradition: seek no more.' Which words are so plainly against protestants, that Whitaker is as plain with St. Chrysostome, saying, 'I answer† that this is an inconsiderable speech, and unworthy so great a father.' But let us conclude with St. Augustine, that the church cannot approve any error against faith, or good manners: 'The church (saith he), being‡ placed between much chaff and cockle, doth tolerate many things; but yet she doth not approve, nor dissemble, nor do those things which are against faith or good life.'

17. "And as I have proved that protestants, according to their grounds, cannot yield infallible assent to the church in any one point; so, by the same reason, I prove, that they cannot rely upon Scripture itself in any one point of faith: not in points of lesser moment (or not fundamental) because in such points the catholic church (according to Dr. Potter), and much more any protestant, may err, and think it is contained in Scripture, when it is not: not in points fundamental, be-

* Hom. 4. † De sacra Scrip. p. 678. ‡ Ep. 119.

cause they must first know what points be fundamental, before they can be assured that they cannot err in understanding the Scripture: and consequently, independently of Scripture, they must foreknow all fundamental points of faith: and therefore they do not indeed rely upon Scripture, either for fundamental or not fundamental points.

18. "Besides, I mainly urge Dr. Potter, and other protestants, that they tell us of certain points which they call fundamental, and we cannot wrest from them a list in particular of such points, without which no man can tell whether or no he errs in points fundamental, and be capable of salvation. And, which is most lamentable, instead of giving us such a catalogue, they fall to wrangle among themselves about the making of it.

19. "Calvin holds* the pope's primacy, invocation of saints, free-will, and such like, to be fundamental errors, overthrowing the gospel. Others are not of his mind, as Melancthon, who saith, in† the opinion of himself, and other his brethren, that 'the monarchy of the Bishop of Rome is of use or profit, to this end, that consent of doctrine may be retained. An agreement, therefore, may be easily established in this article of the pope's primacy, if other articles could be agreed upon.' If the pope's primacy be a means, that consent of doctrine may be retained, first to submit to it, and other articles will be easily agreed upon. Luther also saith of the pope's primacy, it may be born‡ withal. And why then,

† Cent. Ep. Theol. Ep. 74.

O Luther! did you not bear with it? And how can you and your followers be excused from damnable schism, who chose rather to divide God's church, than to bear with that which you confess may be born withal? But let us go forward. That the doctrine of free-will, prayer for the dead, worshipping of images, worship and invocation of saints, real-presence, transubstantiation, receiving under one kind, satisfaction and merit of works, and the mass, be not fundamental errors, is taught (respective) by divers protestants, carefully alleged in the Protestants'* Apology, &c. as namely, by Perkins, Cartwright, Frith, Fulk, Henry, Sparke, Goad, Luther, Reynolds, Whitaker, Tindal, Francis Johnston, with others. Contrary to these, is the Confession of the Christian Faith, so called by protestants, which I mentioned† heretofore, wherein we are damned unto unquenchable fire, for the doctrine of mass, prayer to saints, and for the dead, free-will, presence at idol-service, man's merit, with such like. Justification by faith alone is by some protestants affirmed to be—the soul of the ‡church: the only principal origin of§ salvation, of all other points of ‖doctrine the chiefest and weightiest.—Which yet, as we have seen, is contrary to other protestants, who teach, that merit of good works is not a fundamental error; yea, divers protestants defend

* Tract. 2. c. ii. §. 14. after F.

† Cap. i. v. 4.

‡ Chark in the Tower Disputation, the Four Days Conference.

§ Fox's Acts and Mon. p. 402.

‖ The Confession of Bohemia in the Harmony of Confessions,

merit of good works, as may be seen in Breerly.* One would think that the king's supremacy, for which some blessed men lost their lives, was once among protestants held for a capital point: but now, Dr. Andrews, late of Winchester, in his book against Bellarmine, tells us, that it is sufficient to reckon it among true doctrines. And Wotton denies—that protestants hold† the king's supremacy to be an essential point of faith.—O freedom of the new gospel! Hold with catholics, the pope; or with protestants, the king; or with puritans, neither pope nor king to be the head of the church, all is one, you may be saved. Some, as Castalio,‡ and the whole sect of the academical protestants hold, that doctrines about the supper, baptism, the state and office of Christ, how he is one with his Father, the Trinity, predestination, and divers other such questions, are not necessary to salvation. And (that you may observe how ungrounded and partial their assertions be) Perkins teacheth, that the real presence of our Saviour's body in the sacrament, as it is believed by catholics, is a fundamental error; and yet affirmeth the consubstantiation of Lutherans not to be such, notwithstanding that divers chief Lutherans to their consubstantiation join the prodigious heresy of ubiquitation. Dr. Usher, in his sermon of the Unity of the Catholic Faith, grants salvation to the Ethiopians, who yet with Christian baptism join circumcision. Dr. Potter§ cites the doctrine

* Tract. 3. §. 7. under M. n. 15.

† In his Answer to a Popish Pamphlet, p. 68.

‡ Vid. Gal. Reginald. Calv. Turcis. l. 2. c. vi.

§ Page 113, 114. Morton in his Treatise of the Kingdom of Israel, p. 94.

of some, whom he termeth men of great learning and judgment, that—all who profess to love and honour Jesus Christ are in the visible Christian church, and by catholics to be reputed brethren.—One of these men of great learning and judgment, is Thomas Morton, by Dr. Potter cited in his margent, whose love and honour to Jesus Christ you may perceive by his saying, that—the churches of Arians (who denied our Saviour Christ to be God) are to be accounted the church of God, because they do hold the foundation of the gospel, which is faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world.—And, which is more, it seems by these charitable men, that for being a member of the church, it is not necessary to believe one only God. For Dr. Potter,* among the arguments to prove Hooker's and Morton's opinion, brings this:—the people of the ten tribes, after their defection, notwithstanding their gross corruption and idolatry—remaineth still a true church. We may also, as it seemeth by these men's reasoning, deny the resurrection, and yet be members of the true church. For a learned man (saith Dr. Potter† in behalf of Hooker's and Morton's opinion) was anciently made a bishop of the catholic church, though he did professedly doubt of the last resurrection of our bodies. Dear Saviour! what times do we behold? If one may be a member of the true church, and yet deny the Trinity of the persons, the Godhead of our Saviour, the necessity of baptism; if we may use circumcision, and with the worship of God join idolatry, wherein do we differ from Turks and Jews? Or rather,

* Page 121. † Page 122.

are we not worse than either of them? If they who deny our Saviour's divinity, might be accounted the church of God, how will they deny that favour to those ancient heretics, who denied our Saviour's true humanity; and so the total denial of Christ will not exclude one from being a member of the true church. St. Hilary* makes it of equal necessity for salvation, that we believe our Saviour to be true God, and true man, saying:—This manner of confession we are to hold, that we remember him to be the Son of God, and the Son of man, because the one without the other can give no hope of salvation.—And yet Dr. Potter saith of the aforesaid doctrine of Hooker and Morton—the †reader may be pleased to approve or reject it, as he shall find cause.—And in another place, ‡he sheweth so much good liking of this doctrine, that he explicateth and proveth the church's perpetual visibility by it. And in the second edition of his book he is careful to declare and illustrate it more at large than he had done before: howsoever, this sufficiently sheweth, that they have no certainty what points be fundamental. As for the Arians in particular, the author whom Dr. Potter cites for a moderate catholic, but is indeed a plain heretic, or rather atheist, Lucian like, jesting at all religion,§ placeth Arianism among fundamental errors: but, contrarily, an English protestant divine, masked under the name of Irenæus Philalethes, in a little book in Latin, entitled *Dissertatio de pace, et con-*

* Comment. in Matt. cap. xvi.

† Page 123.

‡ Page 253.

§ A Moderate Examination, &c. cap. i. paulo post initium.

cordia Ecclesiæ, endeavoureth to prove, that even the denial of the blessed Trinity may stand with salvation. Divers protestants have taught, that the Roman church erreth in fundamental points: but Dr. Potter, and others, teach the contrary; which could not happen, if they could agree what be fundamental points. You brand the Donatists with a note of an error—in the matter* and the nature of it properly heretical—because they taught, that the church remained only with them, in the part of Donatus. And yet many protestants are so far from holding that doctrine to be a fundamental error, that themselves go further, and say, that for divers ages before Luther there was no true visible church at all. It is then too apparent, that you have no agreement in specifying what be fundamental points; neither have you any means to determine what they be; for, if you have any such means, why do you not agree? You tell us the Creed contains all points fundamental; which, although it were true, yet you see it serves not to bring you to a particular knowledge and agreement in such points. And no wonder: for (besides what I have said already in the beginning of this chapter, and am to deliver more at large in the next) after so much labour and paper spent to prove that the Creed contains all fundamental points, you conclude—It remains† very probable, that the Creed is the perfect summary of those fundamental truths, whereof consists the unity of faith, and of the catholic church.—Very probable! Then, according to all good logic, the contrary may remain very probable, and so all

* Page 126. † Page 241.

remain as full of uncertainty as before. The whole rule, you say, and the sole judge of your faith must be Scripture. Scripture doth indeed deliver Divine truths, but seldom doth qualify them, or declare whether they be, or be not, absolutely necessary to salvation. You fall* heavy upon Charity Mistaken, because he demands a particular catalogue of fundamental points, which yet you are obliged in conscience to do, if you be able. For without such a catalogue, no man can be assured whether or no he have faith sufficient to salvation: and therefore take it not in ill part, if we again and again demand such a catalogue. And that you may see we proceed fairly, I will perform, on our behalf, what we request of you, and do here deliver a catalogue, wherein are comprised all points by us taught to be necessary to salvation in these words:—We are obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe whatsoever the catholic visible church of Christ proposeth, as revealed by Almighty God.—If any be of another mind, all catholics denounce him to be no catholic. But, enough of this. And I go forward with the infallibility of the church in all points.

20. " For even out of your own doctrine, that the church cannot err in points necessary to salvation, any wise man will infer, that it behoves all who have care of their souls, not to forsake her in any one point. First, Because they are assured, that although her doctrine proved not to be true, in some point, yet even, according to Dr. Potter, the error cannot be fundamental, nor destructive of faith and salvation: neither can they be ac-

cused of any the least imprudence, in erring (if it were possible) with the universal church. Secondly, Since she is, under pain of eternal damnation, to be believed, and obeyed in some things, wherein confessedly she is endued with infallibility, I cannot in wisdom suspect her credit in matters of less moment: for who would trust another in matters of highest consequence, and be afraid to rely on him in things of less moment? Thirdly, Since (as I said) we are undoubtedly obliged not to forsake her in the chiefest, or fundamental points, and that there is no rule to know precisely what, and how many, those fundamental points be, I cannot, without hazard of my soul, leave her in any one point, least, perhaps, that point, or points, wherein I forsake her, prove indeed to be fundamental, and necessary to salvation. Fourthly, That visible church, which cannot err in points fundamental, doth without distinction propound all her definitions concerning matters of faith to be believed under anathemas or curses, esteeming all those that resist to be deservedly cast out of her communion, and holding it a point necessary to salvation, that we believe she cannot err: wherein, if she speak truth, then to deny any one point in particular, which she defineth, or to affirm in general that she may err, puts a man into a state of damnation: whereas to believe her in such points as are not necessary to salvation, cannot endanger salvation; as likewise to remain in her communion, can bring no great harm, because she cannot maintain any damnable error, or practice: but to be divided from her (she being Christ's catholic church) is most certainly damnable. Fifthly, The true church,

being in lawful and certain possession of superiority and power, to command and require obedience from all Christians in some things; I cannot without grievous sin withdraw my obedience in any one, unless I evidently know, that the thing commanded comes not within the compass of those things to which her power extendeth. And who can better inform me, how far God's church can proceed, than God's church herself? or to what doctor can the children and scholars, with greater reason and more security fly for direction, than to the mother and appointed teacher of all Christians? In following her, I sooner shall be excused, than in cleaving to any particular sect or person, teaching or applying Scriptures against her doctrine or interpretation. Sixthly, The fearful examples of innumerable persons, who, forsaking the church upon pretence of her errors, have failed even in fundamental points, and suffered shipwreck of their salvation, ought to deter all Christians from opposing her in any one doctrine, or practice: as (to omit other, both ancient and modern heresies) we see, that divers chief protestants, pretending to reform the corruptions of the church, are come to affirm, that for many ages she erred to death, and wholly perished: which Dr. Potter cannot deny to be a fundamental error against that article of our Creed—I believe the catholic church—as he affirmeth of the Donatists, because they confined the universal church within Africa, or some other small tract of soil. Lest therefore I may fall into some fundamental error, it is most safe for me to believe all the decrees of that church which cannot err fundamentally; especially if we add, that, according to the doctrine

of catholic divines, one error in faith, whether it be for the matter itself, great or small, destroys faith, as is shewed in Charity Mistaken; and consequently, to accuse the church of any one error, is to affirm, that she lost all faith, and erred damnably; which very saying is damnable, because it leaves Christ no visible church on earth.

21. "To all these arguments I add this demonstration: Dr. Potter teacheth, that—there neither was,* nor can be, any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.—But if the church of Christ can err in some points of faith, men not only may, but must, forsake her in those (unless Dr. Potter will have them believe one thing, and profess another): and if such errors and corruptions should fall out to be about the church's liturgy, public service, administration of sacraments, and the like, they, who perceive such errors, must of necessity leave her external communion. And, therefore, if once we grant the church may err, it followeth, that men may, and ought, to forsake her (which is against Dr. Potter's own words), or else they are inexcusable who left the communion of the Roman church, under pretence of errors, which they grant not to be fundamental. And, if Dr. Potter think good to answer this argument, he must remember his own doctrine to be, that even the catholic church may err in points not fundamental.

22. "Another argument for the universal infallibility of the church, I take out of Dr. Potter's own words. 'If (saith he) we† did not dissent in some opinions from the present Roman church,

* Page 75. † Page 97.

we could not agree with the church truly catholic.' These words cannot be true, unless he presuppose that the church truly catholic cannot err in points not fundamental: for if she may err in such points, the Roman church, which he affirmeth to err only in points not fundamental, may agree with the church truly catholic, if she likewise may err in points not fundamental. Therefore, either he must acknowledge a plain contradiction in his own words, or else must grant that the church truly catholic cannot err in points not fundamental, which is what we intended to prove.

23. " If words cannot persuade you, that in all controversies you must rely upon the infallibility of the church, at least yield your assent to deeds: hitherto I have produced arguments drawn, as it were, *ex natura rei*, from the wisdom and goodness of God, who cannot fail to have left some infallible means to determine controversies, which, as we have proved, can be no other, except a visible church, infallible in all her definitions. But because both catholics and protestants receive holy Scripture, we may thence also prove the infallibility of the church in all matters which concern faith and religion. Our Saviour speaketh clearly: 'the gates of hell* shall not prevail against her.' And, '†I will ask my Father, and he will give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of truth.' And, 'But when he, the Spirit of ‡truth cometh, he shall teach you all truth.' The apostle saith, that the church is 'the pillar and ground of §truth.' And, 'He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and

* Matt. xvi. † John xiv. ‡ Ibid. xvi. § 1 Tim. iii.

other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, to the consummation of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the edifying of the body of Christ; until we meet all into the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, into the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: that now we be not children, wavering, and carried about with every wind of doctrine in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, to the circumvention* of error.' All which words seem clearly enough to prove, that the church is universally infallible; without which, unity of faith could not be conserved against 'every wind of doctrine.' And yet Dr. Potter† limits these promises and privileges to fundamental points, in which he grants the church cannot err. I urge the words of Scripture, which are universal, and do not mention any such restraint. I allege that most reasonable and received rule, that Scripture is to be understood literally, as it soundeth, unless some manifest absurdity force us to the contrary. But all will not serve to accord our different interpretation. In the mean time, divers of Dr. Potter's brethren step in, and reject his limitation, as over-large, and somewhat tasting of papistry: and therefore they restrain the mentioned texts, either to the infallibility which the apostles and other sacred writers had in penning of Scripture, or else to the invisible church of the elect; and to them not absolutely, but with a double restriction, that they shall not fall damnably, and finally; and other men have as much right as these to interpose their opinion and inter-

* Ephes. iv. † Page 151. l. 153.

pretation. Behold we are three at debate about the self-same words of Scripture: we confer divers places and texts; we consult the originals; we examine translations; we endeavour to pray heartily; we profess to speak sincerely, to seek nothing but truth, and the salvation of our own souls, and that of our neighbours; and, finally, we use all those means, which, by protestants themselves, are prescribed for finding out the true meaning of Scripture: nevertheless, we neither do, or have any possible means to agree, as long as we are left to ourselves; and when we should chance to be agreed, the doubt will still remain, whether the thing itself be a fundamental point or no: and yet it were great impiety to imagine, that God, the lover of all souls, hath left no certain infallible means, to decide both this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion. Our remedy therefore in these contentions must be, to consult and hear God's visible church, with submissive acknowledgment of her power and infallibility, in whatsoever she proposeth as a revealed truth; according to that Divine advice of St. Augustine, in these words: 'If at length* thou seem to be sufficiently tossed, and hast a desire to put an end to thy pains, follow the way of the catholic discipline, which from Christ himself, by the apostles, hath come down even to us, and from us shall descend to all posterity.' And though I conceive, that the distinction of points, fundamental and not fundamental, hath now been sufficiently confuted, yet that no shadow of dif-

* De Util. Cred. cap. viii.

ficulty may remain, I will particularly refel a common saying of protestants, that it is sufficient for salvation to believe the Apostles' Creed, which they hold to be a summary of all fundamental points of faith.

THE

ANSWER TO THE THIRD CHAPTER:

Wherein it is maintained, that the distinction of points, fundamental and not fundamental, is in this present controversy good and pertinent: and that the catholic church may err in the latter kind of the said points.

1. This distinction is employed by protestants to many purposes; and, therefore, if it be pertinent and good, (as they understand and apply it) the whole edifice built thereon must be either firm and stable, or, if it be not, it cannot be for any default in this distinction.

2. If you object to them discords in matters of faith without any means of agreement—they will answer you, that they want not good and solid means of agreement in matters necessary to salvation; viz. their belief of those things which are plainly and undoubtedly delivered in Scripture, which whoso believes, must of necessity believe all things necessary to salvation: and their mutual suffering one another to abound in their several sense, in matters not plainly and undoubt-

edly there delivered. And for their agreement in all controversies of religion, either they may have means to agree about them or not; if you say they have, why did you before deny it? if they have not means, why do you find fault with them for not agreeing?

3. You will say, that their fault is, that—by remaining protestants, they exclude themselves from the means of agreement which you have—and which by submission to your church they might have also. But if you have means of agreement, the more shame for you that you still disagree. For who, I pray, is more inexcusably guilty, for the omission of any duty? they that either have no means to do it, or else know of none they have, which puts them in the same case, as if they had none; or they which profess to have an easy and expedite means to do it, and yet still leave it undone? "If you had been blind (saith our Saviour to the pharisees) you had had no sin; but now you say you see, therefore your sin remaineth."

4. If you say, you do agree in matters of faith, I say this is ridiculous, for you define matters of faith to be those wherein you agree: so that to say you agree in matters of faith, is to say you agree in those things wherein you do agree. And do not protestants do so likewise? Do not they agree in those things wherein they do agree?

5. But you are all agreed, that only those things wherein you do agree are matters of faith.—And protestants, if they were wise, would do so too. Sure I am they have reason enough to do so: seeing all of them agree with explicit faith in all

those things, which are plainly and undoubtedly delivered in Scripture; that is, in all which God hath plainly revealed: and with an implicit faith, in that sense of the whole Scripture which God intended, whatsoever it was. Secondly, That which you pretend is false; for else, why do some of you hold it against faith, to take or allow the oath of allegiance; others, as learned and honest as they, that it is against faith, and unlawful to refuse it, and allow the refusing of it? Why do some of you hold that it is *de fide*, that the pope is head of the church by Divine law, others the contrary? Some hold it *de fide*, that the blessed Virgin was free from actual sin; others that it is not so. Some that the pope's indirect power over princes in temporalities is *de fide;* others the contrary. Some that it is universal tradition, and consequently *de fide*, that the Virgin Mary was conceived in original sin; others the contrary.

6. But what shall we say now, if you be not agreed touching your pretended means of agreement, how then can you pretend to unity, either actual or potential, more than protestants may? Some of you say, the pope alone without a council may determine all controversies: but others deny it. Some, that a general council without a pope may do so: others deny this. Some, both in conjunction are infallible determiners: others again deny this. Lastly, some among you hold the acceptation of the decrees of councils by the universal church to be the only way to decide controversies: which others deny, by denying the church to be infallible. And, indeed, what way of ending controversies can this be, when either part may pretend, that they are part of the church,

and they receive not the decree, therefore the whole church hath not received it?

7. Again, means of agreeing differences are either rational and well-grounded, and of God's appointment; or voluntary, and taken up at the pleasure of men. Means of the former nature, we say, you have as little as we. For where hath God appointed, that the pope, or a council, or a council confirmed by the pope, or that society of Christians which adhere to him, shall be the infallible judge of controversies? I desire you to shew any one of these assertions plainly set down in Scripture, (as in all reason a thing of this nature should be) or at least delivered with a full consent of fathers, or at least taught in plain terms by any one father for four hundred years after Christ. And if you cannot do this (as I am sure you cannot), and yet will still be obtruding yourselves upon us for our judges, who will not cry out,

——*perisse frontem de rebus?*

8. But then for means of the other kind, such as yours are, we have great abundance of them. For, besides all the ways which you have devised, which we make use of when we please, we have a great many more, which you yet have never thought of, for which we have as good colour out of Scripture, as you have for yours. For, First, We could, if we would, try it by lots, whose doctrine is true, and whose false: and you know it is written, * "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposition of it is from the Lord." 2. We

could refer them to the king, and you know it is written, * "A Divine sentence is in the lips of the king; his mouth transgresseth not in judgment." † "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord." We could refer the matter to any assembly of Christians assembled in the name of Christ, seeing it is written, ‡ "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We may refer it to any priest, because it is written, § "The priest's lips, shall preserve knowledge." ‖ "The scribes and pharisees sit in Moses' chair," &c. To any preacher of the gospel, to any pastor, or doctor; for to every one of them Christ hath promised, ¶ he will be with them "always, even to the end of the world;" and to every one of them, it is said, ** "He that heareth you, heareth me," &c. To any bishop, or prelate; for it is written, †† "Obey your prelates;" and again, ‡‡ "He hath given pastors and doctors, &c. lest we should be carried about with every wind of doctrine." To any particular church of Christians, seeing it is a particular church which is called §§ "The house of God, the pillar and ground of truth;" and seeing of any particular church it is written, ‖‖ "He that heareth not the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen or a publican." We might refer it to any man that prays for God's Spirit; for it is written, ¶¶ "Every one that asketh, receiveth:" and again, *** "If any man want wisdom, let him ask of God,

* Prov. xvi. 10. † Prov. xxi. 1. ‡ Matt. xviii. 20.
§ Mal. ii. 7. ‖ Matt. xxv. 2. ¶ Matt. xxviii. 20.
** Luke x. 16. †† Heb. xiii. 17. ‡‡ Eph. iv. 11.
§§ 1 Tim. iii. 15. ‖‖ Matt. xviii. 17. ¶¶ Matt. vii. 8.
*** Jam. i. 5.

who giveth all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Lastly, we might refer it to the Jews; for, without all doubt, of them it is written, * " My Spirit that is in thee," &c. All these means of agreement, whereof not any one but hath as much probability from Scripture, as that which you obtrude upon us, offer themselves upon a sudden to me; haply many more might be thought on, if we had time, but these are enough to shew, that, would we make use of voluntary and devised means to determine differences, we had them in great abundance. And if you say, these would fail us and contradict themselves: so, as we pretend, have yours. There have been popes against popes; councils against councils; councils confirmed by popes against councils confirmed by popes; lastly, the church of some ages against the church of other ages.

Lastly, Whereas you find fault—that protestants, upbraided with their discord, answer, that they differ only in points not fundamental:—I desire you to tell me, whether they do so, or not so: if they do so, I hope you will not find fault with the answer; if you say, they do not so, but in points fundamental also, then they are not members of the same church one with another, no more than with you: and therefore, why should you object to any of them, their differences from each other, any more than to yourselves, their more and greater differences from you?

10. But they are convinced, sometimes even by their own confessions, that the ancient fathers taught divers points of popery; and then they reply, those fathers may nevertheless be saved, be-

cause those errors were not fundamental.—And may not you also be convinced, by the confessions of your own men, that the fathers taught divers points held by protestants against the church of Rome, and divers against protestants and the church of Rome? Do not your purging indexes clip the tongues, and seal up the lips of a great many for such confessions; and is not the abovecited confession of your Doway divines, plain and full to the same purpose? And do you not also, as freely as we, charge the fathers with errors, and yet say they were saved. Now what else do we understand by an unfundamental error, but such a one with which a man may possibly be saved? So that still you proceed in condemning others for your own faults, and urging arguments against us, which return more strongly upon yourselves.

11. But your will is—we should remember that Christ must always have a visible church.—*Ans.* Your pleasure shall be obeyed, on condition you will not forget, that there is a difference between perpetual visibility and perpetual purity. As for the answer which you make for us, true it is, we believe the catholic church cannot perish, yet that she may, and did, err in points not fundamental; and that protestants were obliged to forsake those errors of the church, as they did, though not the church for her errors; for that they did not, but continued still members of the church. For it is not all one (though you perpetually confound them) to forsake the errors of the church, and to forsake the church: or to forsake the church in her error, and simply to forsake the church; no more than it is for me to renounce my brother's or my friend's vices or errors, and to renounce my

brother or my friend. The former then was done by protestants, the latter was not done: nay, not only not from the catholic, but not so much as from the Roman, did they separate *per omnia*; but only in those practices which they conceived superstitious or impious. If you would at this time propose a form of liturgy, which both sides hold lawful, and then they would not join with you in this liturgy, you might have some colour then to say, they renounce your communion absolutely. But as things are now ordered, they cannot join with you in prayers, but they must partake with you in unlawful practices; and, for this reason, they (not absolutely, but thus far) separate from your communion. And this, I say, they were obliged to do under pain of damnation. Not as if it were damnable to hold an error not damnable, but because it is damnable outwardly to profess and maintain it, and to join with others in the practice of it, when inwardly they did not hold it. Now had they continued in your communion, that they must have done; viz. have professed to believe, and externally practised, your errors, whereof they were convinced that they were errors; which, though the matters of the errors had been not necessary, but only profitable, whether it had not been damnable dissimulation and hypocrisy, I leave it to you to judge. You yourself tell us, within two pages after this, that—you are obliged never to speak any one least lie against your knowledge, §. 2.—Now what is this but to live in a perpetual lie?

12. As for that which, in the next place, you seem so to wonder at, that both catholics and protestants, according to the opinion of protest-

ants, may be saved in their several professions, because, forsooth, we both agree in all fundamental points—I answer, this proposition, so crudely set down, as you have here set it down, I know on protestant will justify: for you seem to make them teach that it is an indifferent thing, for the attainment of salvation, whether a man believe the truth or the falsehood; and that they care not in whether of these religions a man live or die, so he die in either of them: whereas all that they say is this—that those amongst you which want means to find the truth, and so die in error; or use the best means they can with industry, and without partiality to find the truth, and yet die in error, these men, thus qualified, notwithstanding these errors, may be saved. Secondly, For those that have means to find the truth, and will not use them, they conceive, though their case be dangerous, yet if they die with a general repentance for all their sins, known and unknown, their salvation is not desperate. The truths which they hold of faith in Christ and repentance, being, as it were, an antidote against their errors, and their negligence in seeking the truth. Especially, seeing, by confession of both sides, we agree in much more than is simply and indispensably necessary to salvation.

13. But seeing we make such various use of this distinction, is it not prodigiously strange that we will never be induced to give in a particular catalogue what points be fundamental?—And why, I pray, is it so prodigiously strange, that we give no answer to an unreasonable demand? God himself hath told us, * that "where much is given,

* Luke xii. 48.

much shall be required; where little is given, little shall be required." To infants, deaf men, madmen, nothing, for aught we know, is given; and, if it be so, of them nothing shall be required. Others, perhaps, may have means only given them to believe, * "that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him;" and to whom thus much only is given, to them it shall not be damnable, that they believe but only thus much. Which methinks is very manifest from the apostle, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where, having first said, that "without faith it is impossible to please God," he subjoins, as his reason, "For whosoever cometh unto God must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him." Where, in my opinion, this is plainly intimated, that this is the *minimum quod sic*, the lowest degree of faith, wherewith, in men capable of faith, God will be pleased; and that with this lowest degree he will be pleased, where means of rising higher are deficient. Besides, if without this belief, "that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek him," God will not be pleased, then his will is, that we should believe it. Now his will it cannot be, that we should believe a falsehood; it must be therefore true, "that he is a rewarder of them that seek him." Now it is possible that they, which never heard of Christ, may seek God; therefore it is true, that even they shall please him, and be rewarded by him; I say rewarded, not with bringing them immediately to salvation without Christ, but with bringing them, according to his good pleasure, first, to faith in

Christ, and so to salvation. To which belief a
story of Cornelius, in the tenth chapter of the Ac
of the Apostles, and St. Peter's words to him, a
to me a great inducement. For, First, It is evide
he believed not in Christ, but was a mere gentil
and one who knew not but men might be wo
shipped; and yet we are assured, that "his pra
ers and alms (even while he was in that stat
came up for a memorial before God, that h
prayer was heard, and his alms had in remen
brance in the sight of God," ver. 4. That upo
his then fearing God, and working righteou
ness (such as it was) he was accepted with Go
But how accepted? Not to be brought immed
ately to salvation, but to be promoted to a high
degree of the knowledge of God's will: for so
is in the fourth and fifth verses: "Call for o
Simon, whose surname is Peter, he shall t
thee what thou oughtest to do:" and, at ver. 3
"We are all here present before God, to hear
things that are commanded thee of God." S
that though even in his gentilism, he was accept
for his present state; yet, if he had continued in
and refused to believe in Christ after the sufficie
revelation of the gospel to him, and God's will
have him believe it, he that was accepted befo
would not have continued accepted still: for th
that condemnation had come upon him,—th
light was come unto him, and he "loved darkne
more than light." So that (to proceed a step fa
ther) to whom faith in Christ is sufficiently pr
pounded, as necessary to salvation, to them it
simply necessary and fundamental to believe
Christ; that is, to expect remission of sins a
salvation from him, upon the performance of t

conditions he requires; among which conditions one is, that we believe what he hath revealed, when it is sufficiently declared to have been revealed by him: for, by doing so, "we set our seal that God is true," and that Christ was sent by him. Now that may be sufficiently declared to one (all things considered), which (all things considered to another) is not sufficiently declared; and, consequently, that may be fundamental and necessary to one, which to another is not so. Which variety of circumstances makes it impossible to set down an exact catalogue of fundamentals; and proves your request as reasonable as if you should desire us (according to the fable) to make a coat to fit the moon in all her changes; or to give you a garment that will fit all statures; or to make you a dial to serve all meridians; or to design particularly, what provision will serve an army for a year; whereas there may be an army of ten thousand, there may be of one hundred thousand: and therefore, without setting down a catalogue of fundamentals in particular, (because none that can be given can universally serve for all men, God requiring more of them to whom he gives more, and less of them to whom he gives less) we must content ourselves by a general description to tell you what is fundamental; and, to warrant us in doing so, we have your example, §. 19. where, being engaged to give us a catalogue of fundamentals, instead thereof you tell us only in general—that all is fundamental, and not to be disbelieved, under pain of damnation, which the church hath defined.—As you therefore think it enough to say in general, that all is fundamental which the church hath defined, without setting down in particular

a complete catalogue of all things, which in any age the church hath defined (which, I believe, you will not undertake to do; and, if you do, it will be contradicted by your fellows): so in reason you might think it enough for us also to say in general, that it is sufficient for any man's salvation to believe that the Scripture is true, and contains all things necessary for salvation; and do his best endeavour to find and believe the true sense of it; without delivering any particular catalogue of the fundamentals of faith.

14. Neither doth the want of such a catalogue leave us in such a perplexed uncertainty as you pretend. For though, perhaps, we cannot exactly distinguish in the Scripture what is revealed, because it is necessary, from what is necessary, consequently and accidentally, merely because it is revealed: yet we are sure enough, that all that is necessary any way is there; and therefore, in believing all that is there, we are sure to believe all that is necessary. And if we err from the true and intended sense of some, nay, many obscure and ambiguous texts of Scripture, yet we may be sure enough that we err not damnably; because, if we do indeed desire and endeavour to find the truth, we may be sure we do so, and as sure that it cannot consist with the revealed goodness of God, to damn him for error, that desires and endeavours to find the truth.

15. Ad §. 2. The effect of this paragraph (forasmuch as concerns us) is this: that for any man to deny belief to any one thing, be it great or small, known by him to be revealed by Almighty God for a truth, is, in effect, to charge God with falsehood: for it is to say, that God affirms that

to be a truth which he either knows to be not a truth, or which he doth not know to be a truth; and therefore, without all controversy, this is a damnable sin. To this I subscribe with hand and heart, adding withal, that not only he which knows, but he which believes (nay, though it be erroneously) any thing to be revealed by God, and yet will not believe it nor assent unto it, is in the same case, and commits the same sin of derogation from God's most perfect and pure veracity.

16. Ad. §. 3. I said purposely knows by himself, and believes himself; for as, without any disparagement of a man's honesty, I may believe something to be false, which he affirms of his certain knowledge to be true; provided I neither know nor believe that he hath so affirmed: so, without any the least dishonour to God's eternal never-failing veracity, I may doubt of, or deny, some truth revealed by him, if I neither know nor believe it to be revealed by him.

17. Seeing therefore the crime of calling God's veracity in question, and consequently (according to your grounds) of erring fundamentally, is chargeable upon those only that believe the contrary of any one point known (not by others) but themselves to be testified by God: I cannot but fear, (though I hope otherwise), that your heart condemned you of a great calumny and egregious sophistry, in imputing fundamental and damnable errors to disagreeing protestants; because, forsooth, some of them disbelieve; and directly, wittingly, and willingly oppose, what others do believe to be testified by the word of God. The sophistry of your discourse will be apparent, if it be

contrived into a syllogism: thus, therefore, in effect you argue:

Whosoever disbelieves any thing known by himself to be revealed by God, imputes falsehood to God, and therefore errs fundamentally:

But some protestants disbelieve those things, which others believe to be testified by God;

Therefore, they impute falsehood to God, and err fundamentally:

Neither can you with any colour pretend, that in these words—known to be testified by God—you meant—not by himself, but by any other: seeing he only in fact affirms, that God doth deceive, or is deceived, who denies some things which himself knows or believes to be revealed by God, as before I have domonstrated. For otherwise, if I should deny belief to some thing which God had revealed secretly to such a man as I had never heard of, I should be guilty of calling God's veracity into question, which is evidently false. Besides, how can it be avoided, but the Jesuits and Dominicans, the Dominicans and Franciscans, must upon this ground differ fundamentally, and one of them err damnably, seeing the one of them disbelieves, and willingly opposes, what the others believe to be the word of God?

18. Whereas you say, that—the difference among protestants consists in this, that some believe some points, of which others are ignorant, or not bound expressly to know—I would gladly know whether you speak of protestants differing in profession only, or in opinion also. If the first, why do you say, presently after, that some disbelieve what others of them believe? If they differ in opi-

nion, then sure they are ignorant of the truth of each other's opinions; it being impossible and contradictious, that a man should know one thing to be true, and believe the contrary; or know it, and not believe it. And if they do not know the truth of each other's opinions, then I hope you will grant they are ignorant of it. If your meaning were, they were not ignorant, that each other held these opinions, or of the sense of the opinions which they held; I answer, this is nothing to the convincing of their understandings of the truth of them; and these remaining unconvinced of the truth of them, they are excusable if they do not believe.

19. But—ignorance of what we are expressly bound to know, is itself a fault, and therefore cannot be an excuse:—and therefore if you could shew, that protestants differ in those points, the truth whereof (which can be but one) they were bound expressly to know, I should easily yield that one side must of necessity be in a mortal crime. But for want of proof of this, you content yourself only to say it; and therefore I also might be contented only to deny it, yet I will not but give a reason for my denial. And my reason is, because our obligation expressly to know any Divine truth must arise from God's manifest revealing of it, and his revealing unto us that he hath revealed it, and that his will is we should believe it: no, in the points controverted among protestants, he hath not so dealt with us, therefore he hath not laid any such obligation upon us. The major of this syllogism is evident, and therefore I will not stand to prove it: the minor also will be evident to him that considers that, in all the

controversies of protestants there is a seeming conflict of Scripture with Scripture, reason with reason, authority with authority: which how it can consist with the manifest revealing of the truth of either side I cannot well understand. Besides, though we grant that Scripture, reason, and authority, were all on one side, and the appearances of the other side all easily answerable; yet if we consider the strange power that education, and prejudices instilled by it, have over even excellent understandings, we may well imagine that many truths, which in themselves are revealed plainly enough, are yet to such or such a man, prepossessed with contrary opinions, not revealed plainly: neither doubt I, but God, who knows whereof we are made, and what passions we are subject unto, will compassionate such infirmities, and not enter into judgment with us for those things, which, all things considered, were unavoidable.

20. But till fundamentals (say you) be sufficiently proposed (as revealed by God) it is not against faith to reject them; or rather, it is not possible prudently to believe them: and points unfundamental, being thus sufficiently proposed as Divine truths, may not be denied: therefore you conclude, there is no difference between them.—*Ans.* A circumstantial point may by accident become fundamental, because it may be so proposed, that the denial of it will draw after it the denial of this fundamental truth—that all which God says is true. Notwithstanding in themselves there is a main difference between them; points fundamental being those only which are revealed by God, and commanded to be preached to all, and believed by all. Points circumstantial being

such, as though God hath revealed them, yet the pastors of the church are not bound, under pain of damnation, particularly to teach them unto all men every where, and the people may be securely ignorant of them.

21. You say—not erring in points fundamental, is not sufficient for the preservation of the church; because any error maintained by it against God's revelation is destructive.—I answer, if you mean against God's revelation, known by the church to be so, it is true; but it is impossible that the church should do so; for *ipso facto* in doing it, it were a church no longer. But, if you mean against some revelation, which the church by error thinks to be no revelation, it is false. The church may ignorantly disbelieve such a revelation, and yet continue a church; which thus I prove: That the gospel was to be preached to all nations was a truth revealed before our Saviour's ascension, in these words: "Go and teach all nations." (Matt. xxviii. 19.) Yet through prejudice or inadvertence, or some other cause, the church disbelieved it, as it is apparent out of the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Acts, until the conversion of Cornelius; and yet was still a church. Therefore, to disbelieve some Divine revelation, not knowing it to be so, is not destructive of salvation, or of the being of a church. Again, it is a plain revelation of God, that *the sacrament of the eucharist should be administered in both kinds: and †that the public hymns and prayers of the church should be in such a language as is most for edification: yet these revelations the

* 1 Cor. xi. 28. † 1 Cor. xiv. 15, 16. 26.

church of Rome not seeing, by reason of the veil before their eyes, their church's supposed infallibility, I hope the denial of them shall not be laid to their charge, no otherwise than as building hay and stubble on the foundation, not overthrowing the foundation itself.

22. Ad. §. 2. In the beginning of this paragraph, we have this argument against this distinction—It is enough (by Dr. Potter's confession) to believe some things negatively; *i. e.* not to deny them; therefore all denial of any Divine truth excludes salvation.—As if you should say, one horse is enough for a man to go a journey; therefore without a horse no man can go a journey. As if some Divine truths, viz. those which are plainly revealed, might not be such, as of necessity were not to be denied: and others, for want of sufficient declaration, deniable without danger. Indeed, if Dr. Potter had said there had been no Divine truth, declared sufficiently or not declared, but must upon pain of damnation be believed, or at least not denied; then you might justly have concluded as you do: but now, that some may not be denied, and that some may be denied without damnation, why they may not both stand together, I do not yet understand.

23. In the remainder you infer out of Dr. Potter's words—that all errors are alike damnable, if the manner of propounding the contrary truths be not different—which, for aught I know, all protestants, and all that have sense, must grant. Yet I deny your illation from hence, that the distinction of points into fundamental and unfundamental, is vain and uneffectual for the purpose of protestants. For though, being alike proposed as

Divine truths, they are by accident alike necessary; yet the real difference still remains between them, that they are not alike necessary to be proposed.

24. Ad §. 5. The next paragraph, it it be brought out of the clouds, will, I believe, have in it these propositions: 1. Things are distinguished by their different natures. 2. The nature of faith is taken, not from the matter believed; for then they that believed different matters should have different faiths, but from the motive to it. 3. This motive is God's revelation. 4. This revelation is alike for all objects. 5. Protestants disagree in things equally revealed by God; therefore they forsake the formal motives of faith; and therefore have no faith nor unity therein. Which is truly a very proper and convenient argument to close up a weak discourse, wherein both the propositions are false for matter, confused and disordered for the form, and the conclusion utterly inconsequent. First, for the second proposition; who knows not that the essence of all habits (and therefore of faith among the rest) is taken from their act, and their object? If the habit be general, from the act and object in general; if the habit be special, from the act and object in special. Then for the motive to a thing; that it cannot be of the essence of the thing to which it moves, who can doubt that knows that a motive is an efficient cause, and that the efficient is always extrinsical to the effect? For the fourth, that God's revelation is alike for all objects, it is ambiguous: and if the sense of it be, that his revelation is an equal motive to induce us to believe all objects revealed by him, it is true, but impertinent: if the sense of it be, that all objects revealed by

God are alike, (that is, alike plainly and undoubtedly) revealed by him, it is pertinent, but most untrue. Witness the great diversity of texts of Scripture, whereof some are so plain and evident, that no man of ordinary sense can mistake the sense of them. Some are so obscure and ambiguous, that to say this or this is the certain sense of them, were high presumption. For the fifth, protestants disagree in things equally revealed by God: in themselves, perhaps, but not equally to them, whose understandings, by reason of their different educations, are fashioned and shaped for the entertainment of various opinions, and consequently some of them more inclined to believe such a sense of Scripture, others to believe another; which, to say that God will not take it into his consideration in judging men's opinions, is to disparage his goodness. But to what purpose is it that these things are equally revealed to both, (as the light is equally revealed to all blind men) if they be not fully revealed to either? The sense of this Scripture, "Why are they then baptized for the dead?" And this, "He shall be saved, yet so as by fire;" and a thousand others, is equally revealed to you, and to another interpreter, that is, certainly to neither. He now conceives one sense of them, and you another; and would it not be an excellent inference, if I should conclude now as you do? That you forsake the formal motive of faith, which is God's revelation, and consequently lose all faith and unity therein? So likewise the Jesuits and Dominicans, and the Franciscans and Dominicans, disagree about things equally revealed by Almighty God; and, seeing they do so, I beseech you let me understand, why

this reason will not exclude them as well as protestants from all faith and unity therein? Thus you have failed of your undertaking in your first part of your title, and that is a very ill omen, especially in points of so straight mutual dependance, that we shall have but slender performance in your second assumpt: which is—that the church is infallible in all her definitions, whether concerning points fundamental or not fundamental.

25. Ad. §. 7, 8. The reasons in these two paragraphs, as they were alleged before, so they were before answered, Chap. 2. And thither I remit the reader.

26. Ad. 9, 10, 11. I grant that the church cannot, without damnable sin, either deny any thing to be truth, which he knows to be God's truth; or propose any thing as his truth, which she knows not to be so.—But that she may not do this by ignorance or mistake, and so, without damnable sin, that you should have proved, but have not. But, say you—this excuse cannot serve: for if the church be assisted only for points fundamental, she cannot but know that she may err in points not fundamental.—Answer, It does not follow, unless you suppose that the church knows that she is assisted no farther: but if, being assisted only so far, she yet did conceive by error, her assistance absolute and unlimited, or, if knowing her assistance, restrained to fundamentals, she yet conceived by error, that she should be guarded from proposing any thing but what was fundamental, then the consequence is apparently false.—But at least she cannot be certain that she cannot err, and therefore cannot be excused from headlong and pernicious temerity in proposing points not fundamental, to be believed by Christians as matters of faith.—Answer,

Neither is this deduction worth any thing, unless it be understood of such unfundamental points, as she is not warranted to propose by evident text of Scripture. Indeed, if she propose such, as matters of faith certainly true, she may well be questioned, *quo warranto?* she builds without a foundation, and says,—Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord doth not say so: which cannot be excused from rashness and high presumption; such a presumption, as an ambassador should commit, who should say in his master's name that for which he hath no commission: of the same nature, I say, but of a higher strain: as much as the King of heaven is greater than any earthly king. But though she may err in some points not fundamental, yet may she have certainty enough in proposing others; as for example, these: that Abraham begat Isaac, that St. Paul had a cloak, that Timothy was sick; because these, though not fundamental; *i. e.* not essential parts of Christianity, yet are evidently, and undeniably, set down in Scripture, and consequently may be, without all rashness, proposed by the church as certain Divine revelations. Neither is your argument concluding, when you say—if in such things she may be deceived she must be always uncertain of all such things—for my sense may sometimes possibly deceive me, yet I am certain enough that I see what I see, and feel what I feel. Our judges are not infallible in their judgments, yet are they certain enough that they judge aright, and that they proceed according to the evidence that is given, when they condemn a thief or a murderer to the gallows. A traveller is not always certain of his way, but often mistaken; and doth it therefore follow that he can have no as-

surance that Charing-cross is his right way from the Temple to Whitehall? the ground of your error here, is your not distinguishing between actual certainty and absolute infallibility. Geometricians are not infallible in their own science; yet they are very certain of those things which they see demonstrated: and carpenters are not infallible, yet certain of the straightness of those things which agree with the rule and square. So, though the church be not infallibly certain, that in all her definitions, whereof some are about disputable and ambiguous matters, she shall proceed according to her rule; yet being certain of the infallibility of her rule, and that, in this or that thing, she doth manifestly proceed according to it, she may be certain of the truth of some particular decrees, and yet not certain that she shall never decree but what is true.

27. Ad. §. 12. But if the church may err in points not fundamental, she may err in proposing Scripture, and so we cannot be assured, whether she have not been deceived already.—The church may err in her proposition or custody of the canon of Scripture, if you understand by the church, any present church of one denomination; for example, the Roman, the Greek, or so. Yet have we sufficient certainty of Scripture, not from the bare testimony of any present church, but from universal tradition, of which the testimony of any present church is but a little part. So that here you fall into the fallacy, *a dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter*. For, in effect, this is the sense of your argument: unless the church be infallible, we can have no certainty of Scripture from the authority of the church: therefore, unless the church

be infallible, we can have no certainty hereof at all. As if a man should say, If the vintage of France miscarry, we can have no wine from France; therefore, if that vintage miscarry, we can have no wine at all. And for the incorruption of Scripture, I know no other rational assurance we can have of it than such as we have of the incorruption of other ancient books, that is, the consent of ancient copies: such I mean for the kind, though it may be far greater for the degree, of it. And if the Spirit of God give any man any other assurance hereof, this is not rational and discursive, but supernatural and infused: an assurance it may be to himself, but no argument to another. As for the infallibility of the church, it is so far from being a proof of the Scriptures' incorruption, that no proof can be pretended for it, but controverted places of Scripture; which yet are as subject to corruption as any other, and more likely to have been corrupted (if it had been possible) than any other, and made to speak as they do, for the advantage of those men, whose ambition it hath been a long time to bring all under their authority. Now then, if any man should prove the Scriptures uncorrupted, because the church says so, which is infallible; I would demand again, touching this very thing, that there is an infallible church, seeing it is not of itself evident, how shall I be assured of it? and what can he answer, but that the Scripture says so, in these and these places: hereupon I would ask him, how shall I be assured that the Scriptures are incorrupted in these places; seeing it is possible, and not altogether improbable, that these men, which desire to be thought infallible, when they had the go-

vernment of all things in their own hands, may have altered them for their purpose? If to this he answer again, that the church is infallible, and therefore cannot do so; I hope it would be apparent, that he runs round in a circle, and proves the Scriptures' incorruption by the church's infallibility, and the church's infallibility by the Scriptures' incorruption; that is, in effect, the church's infallibility by the church's infallibility, and the Scriptures' incorruption by the Scriptures' incorruption.

28. Now for your observation, that—some books which were not always known to be canonical have been afterwards received for such; but never any book or syllable defined for canonical, was after questioned or rejected for apocryphal—I demand, touching the first sort, whether they were commended to the church by the apostles as canonical or not? if not, seeing the whole faith was preached by the apostles to the church, and seeing, after the apostles, the church pretends to no new revelations, how can it be an article of faith to believe them canonical? and how can you pretend that your church, which makes this an article of faith, is so assisted, as not to propose any thing as a Divine truth which is not revealed by God? If they were, how then is the church an infallible keeper of the canon of the Scripture, which hath suffered some books of canonical Scripture to be lost? and others, to lose for a long time their being canonical, at least the necessity of being so esteemed, and afterwards, as it were by the law of *Postliminium*, hath restored their authority and canonicalness unto them? If this was delivered by the apostles to the church, the point was sufficiently discussed; and therefore

your church's omission to teach it for some ages, as an article of faith, nay, degrading it from the number of articles of faith, and putting it among disputable problems, was surely not very laudable. If it were not revealed by God to the apostles, and by the apostles to the church, then can it be no revelation, and therefore her presumption in proposing it as such is inexcusable.

29. And then for the other part of it—that never any book or syllable defined for canonical, was afterwards questioned or rejected for apocryphal—certainly it is a bold asseveration, but extremely false. For I demand, the Book of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom, the epistles of St. James and to the Hebrews, were they by the apostles approved for canonical, or no? If not, with what face dare you approve them, and yet pretend that all your doctrine is apostolical; especially, seeing it is evident that this point is not deducible, by rational discourse, from any other defined by them? If they were approved by them, this, I hope, was a sufficient definition; and therefore you were best rub your forehead hard, and say, that these books were never questioned. But, if you do so, then I shall be bold to ask you, what books you meant in saying before—some books, which were not always known to be canonical, have been afterwards received.—Then for the Book of Maccabees, I hope you will say it was defined for canonical before St. Gregory's time; and yet he, (lib. xix. Moral. c. xiii.) citing a testimony out of it, prefaceth to it after this manner; "Concerning which matter we do not amiss, if we produce a testimony out of books, although not canonical, yet set forth for the edification of the church. For

Eleazer, in the Book of Maccabees," &c. which, if it be not to reject it from being canonical, is, without question, at least to question it. Moreover, because you are so punctual as to talk of words and syllables, I would know whether, before Sixtus Quintus's time, your church had a defined canon of Scripture, or not? If not, then was your church surely a most vigilant keeper of Scripture, that for one thousand five hundred years had not defined what was Scripture, and what was not. If it had, then I demand, was it that set forth by Sixtus? or that set forth by Clement? or a third different from both? If it were that set forth by Sixtus, then is it now condemned by Clement; if that of Clement, it was condemned I say; but sure you will say contradicted and questioned by Sixtus: if different from both, then was it questioned and condemned by both, and still lies under the condemnation. But then, lastly, suppose it had been true, that both some book not known to be canonical had been received, and that never any after receiving had been questioned: how had this been a sign that the church is infallibly assisted by the Holy Ghost? In what mood or figure would this conclusion follow out of these premises? Certainly, your flying to such poor signs as these are, is to me a great sign that you labour with penury of better arguments; and that thus to catch at shadows and bulrushes, is a shrewd sign of a sinking cause.

30. Ad. §. 13. We are told here—that the general promises of infallibility to the church, must not be restrained only to points fundamental; because then the apostles' words and writings may also be restrained.—The argument put in form, and

made complete, by supply of the concealed proposition, runs thus:

The infallibility promised to the present church of any age, is as absolute and unlimited, as that promised to the apostles in their preaching and writings:

But the apostles' infallibility is not to be limited to fundamentals.

Therefore neither is the church's infallibility thus to be limited. Or, thus:

The apostles' infallibility in their preaching and writing may be limited to fundamentals, as well as the infallibility of the present church: but that is not to be done: therefore this also is not to be done.

Now to this argument, I answer, that, if by may be as well, in the major proposition, be understood, may be as possibly, it is true, but impertinent. If by it we understand, may be as justly and rightly, is very pertinent, but very false. So that as Dr. Potter limits the infallibility of the present church unto fundamentals, so another may limit the apostles unto them also. He may do it, *de facto*, but *de jure* he cannot; that may be done, and done lawfully; this also may be done, but not lawfully. That may be done, and, if it be done, cannot be confuted: this also may be done, but, if it be done, may easily be confuted. It is done to our hand in this very paragraph, by five words taken out of Scripture: "All Scripture is divinely inspired." Shew but as much for the church: shew where it is written, That all the decrees of the church are divinely inspired; and the controversy will be at an end. Besides, there is not the same reason for the church's absolute infalli-

bility, as for the apostles and Scriptures. For, if the church fall into error, it may be reformed by comparing it with the rule of the apostles' doctrine and Scripture: but, if the apostles have erred in delivering the doctrine of Christianity, to whom shall we have recourse, for the discovering and correcting their error? Again, there is not so much strength required in the edifice as in the foundation; and if but wise men have the ordering of the building, they will make it a much surer thing, that the foundation shall not fail the building, than that the building shall not fall from the foundation. And though the building be to be of brick or stone, and perhaps of wood, yet it may be possibly they will have a rock for their foundation, whose stability is a much more indubitable thing, than the adherence of the structure to it. Now the apostles, and prophets, and canonical writers, are the foundation of the church, according to that of St. Paul, "built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets;" therefore their stability, in reason, ought to be greater than the church's, which is built upon them. Again, a dependant infallibility (especially if the dependance be voluntary) cannot be so certain, as that on which it depends: but the infallibility of the church depends upon the infallibility of the apostles, as the straightness of the thing regulated upon the straightness of the rule; and, besides, this dependance is voluntary, for it is in the power of the church to deviate from this rule; being nothing else but an aggregation of men, of which every one hath free-will, and is subject to passions and error: therefore, the church's infallibility is not so certain as that of the apostles.

31. Lastly, *Quid verba audiam, cum facta videam?* If you be so infallible as the apostles were, shew it as the apostles did: "They went forth (saith St. Mark) and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming their words with signs following." It is impossible that God should lie, and that the eternal Truth should set his hand and seal to the confirmation of a falsehood, or of such doctrine as is partly true, and partly false. The apostles' doctrine was thus confirmed, therefore it was entirely true, and in no part either false or uncertain. I say, in no part of that which they delivered constantly, as a certain Divine truth, and which had the attestation of Divine miracles. For that the apostles themselves, even after the sending of the Holy Ghost, were, and through inadvertence or prejudice, continued for a time in an error, repugnant to a revealed truth; it is, as I have already noted, unanswerably evident, from the story of the Acts of the Apostles. For notwithstanding our Saviour's express warrant and injunction, to "go and preach to all nations," yet until St. Peter was better informed by a vision from heaven, and by the conversion of Cornelius, both he and the rest of the church held it unlawful for them to go or preach the gospel to any but the Jews.

32. And for those things which they profess to deliver as the dictates of human reason and prudence, and not as Divine revelations, why we should take them to be Divine revelations, I see no reason; nor how we can do so, and not contradict the apostles, and God himself. Therefore, when St. Paul says, in the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, vii. 12. "To the rest speak I, not the

Lord;" and again, "concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I deliver my judgment:" if we will pretend that the Lord did certainly speak what St. Paul spake, and that his judgment was God's commandment, shall we not plainly contradict St. Paul, and that Spirit, by which he wrote? which moved him to write, as in other places, Divine revelations, which he certainly knew to be such: so, in this place, his own judgment touching some things which God had not particularly revealed unto him. And if Dr. Potter did speak to this purpose—that the apostles were infallible only in these things which they spake of certain knowledge—I cannot see what danger there were in saying so: yet the truth is, you wrong Dr. Potter. It is not he, but Dr. Stapleton in him, that speaks the words you cavil at. Dr. Stapleton, saith he, p. 140. is full and punctual to this purpose: then sets down the effect of his discourse, *l.* 8. Princ. Doct. 4. c. 15. and in that, the words you cavil at; and then, p. 150. he shuts up this paragraph with these words: thus Dr. Stapleton. So that, if either the doctrine or the reason be not good, Dr. Stapleton, not Dr. Potter, is to answer for it.

33. Neither do Dr. Potter's ensuing words—limit the apostles' infallibility to truths absolutely necessary to salvation—if you read them with any candour; for, it is evident, he grants the church infallible in truth absolutely necessary; and as evident, that he ascribes to the apostles the Spirit's guidance, and consequently infallibility, in a more high and absolute manner than any since them.—From whence, thus I argue: he that grants the church infallible in fundamentals, and ascribes

to the apostles the infallible guidance of the Spirit, in a more high and absolute manner than to any since them, limits not the apostles' infallibility to fundamentals; but Dr. Potter grants to the church such a limited infallibility, and ascribes to the apostles, the Spirit's infallible guidance in a more high and absolute manner; therefore he limits not the apostles' infallibility to fundamentals. I once knew a man out of courtesy help a lame dog over a stile, and he for requital bit him by the fingers: just so you serve Dr. Potter. He out of courtesy grants you that those words, "The Spirit shall lead you into all truth, and shall abide with you ever;" though in their high and most absolute sense, they agree only to the apostles, yet in a conditional, limited, moderate, secondary sense, they may be understood of the church: but says, that if they be understood of the church, "all must not be simply all," no, nor so large an all as the apostles' all, "but all necessary to salvation." And you, to requite his courtesy in granting you thus much, cavil at him, as if he had prescribed these bounds to the apostles also, as well as the present church. Whereas, he hath explained himself to the contrary, both in the clause aforementioned, "The apostles who had the Spirit's guidance in a more high and absolute manner than any since them;" and in these words ensuing, "whereof the church is simply ignorant;" and again, "wherewith the church is not acquainted." But most clearly in those which, being most incompatible to the apostles, you with an *&c.* I cannot but fear, craftily have concealed: "How many obscure texts of Scripture which she understands not? How many school-questions,

which she hath not, haply cannot determine? And, for matters of fact, it is apparent that the church may err;" and then concludes, that "we must understand by all truths, not simply all, but (if you conceive the words as spoken of the church) all truth absolutely necessary to salvation;" and yet, beyond all this, the negative part of his answer agrees very well to the apostles themselves; for that all, which they were led unto, was not simply *all*, otherwise St. Paul erred in saying, "we know in part;" but such an *all* as was requisite to make them the church's foundations. Now such they could not be, without freedom from error, in all those things which they delivered constantly, as certain revealed truths. For, if we once suppose they may have erred in some things of this nature, it will be utterly undiscernible what they have erred in, and what they have not. Whereas, though we suppose the church hath erred in some things, yet we have means to know what she hath erred in, and what she hath not; I mean, by comparing the doctrine of the present church with the doctrine of the primitive church delivered in Scripture. But then, last of all, suppose the Doctor had said, (which I know he never intended) that this promise, in this place made to the apostles, was to be understood only of truths absolutely necessary to salvation; is it consequent that he makes their preaching and writing not infallible in points not fundamental? Do you not blush for shame at this sophistry? The Doctor says, no more was promised in this place; therefore he says no more was promised! Are there not other places besides this? And may not that be promised in other places, which is not promised in this?

34. But if the apostles were infallible in all things proposed by them as Divine truths, the like must be affirmed of the church, because Dr. Potter teacheth the said promise to be verified in the church. True, he doth so, but not in so absolute a manner. Now what is opposed to absolute, but limited, or restrained? To the apostles then it was made, and to them only, yet the words are true of the church. And this very promise might have been made to it, though here it is not. They agree to the apostles in a higher, to the church in a lower sense; to the apostles in a more absolute, to the church in a more limited sense. To the apostles absolutely for the church's direction; to the church conditionally by adherence to that direction, and so far as she doth adhere to it. In a word, the apostles were led into all truths by the Spirit, *efficaciter:* the church is led also into all truths by the apostles' writings, *sufficienter:* so that the apostles and the church may be fitly compared to the star, and the wise men. The star was directed by the finger of God, and could not but go right to the place where Christ was: but the wise men were led by the star to Christ; led by it, I say, not *efficaciter* or *irresistibiliter*, but *sufficienter;* so that, if they would, they might follow it; if they would not, they might choose. So was it between the apostles writing Scriptures and the church. They, in their writings, were infallibly assisted to propose nothing as a Divine truth, but what was so: the church is also led into all truth, but it is by the intervening of the apostles' writings: but it is as the wise men were led by the star, or as a traveller is directed by a Mercurial statue, or as a pilot by his card and

compass, led sufficiently, but not irresistibly; led as that she may follow, not so that she must. For, seeing the church is a society of men, whereof every one, (according to the doctrine of the Romish church) hath free-will in believing, it follows, that the whole aggregate hath free-will in believing. And if any man say that at least it is morally impossible, that of so many, whereof all may believe aright, not any should do so: I answer, it is true, if they did all give themselves any liberty of judgment. But if all (as the case is here) captivate their understandings to one of them, all are as likely to err as that one; and he more likely to err than any other, because he may err, and thinks he cannot, and because he conceives the Spirit absolutely promised to that succession of bishops, of which many have been notoriously and confessedly wicked men—men of the world: whereas this Spirit is the "Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." Besides, let us suppose, that neither in this, nor in any other place, God hath promised any more unto them, but to lead them into all truth, necessary for their own, and other men's, salvation: doth it therefore follow that they were, *de facto*, led no farther? God, indeed, is obliged by his veracity to do all that he hath promised, but is there any thing that binds him to do any more? May not he be better than his word, but you will quarrel at him? May not his bounty exceed his promise? And may not we have certainty enough that oft-times it doth so? God at first did not promise to Solomon, in his vision at Gibeon, any more than what he asked, which was—wisdom to govern his people, and that

he gave him. But yet, I hope, you will not deny that we have certainty enough that he gave him something which neither God had promised, nor he had asked. If you do, you contradict God himself: for, "Behold (saith God), because thou hast asked this thing, I have done according to thy word. Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee: and I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee in all thy days." God, for aught appears, never obliged himself by promise, to shew St. Paul those unspeakable mysteries, which in the third heaven he shewed unto him; and yet, I hope, we have certainty enough that he did so. God promises to those that seek his kingdom, and the righteousness thereof, that all things necessary shall be added unto them; and in rigour by his promise he is obliged to do no more; and if he give them necessaries he hath discharged his obligation: shall we therefore be so injurious to his bounty towards us, as to say it is determined by the narrow bounds of mere necessity? So, though God hath obliged himself by promise to give his apostles infallibility only in things necessary to salvation; nevertheless, it is utterly inconsequent that he gave them no more, than by the rigour of his promise he was engaged to do; or that we can have no assurance of any farther assistance than he gave them; especially when he himself, both by his word and by his works, hath assured us, that he did assist them

fearful consequences (as you call them) is turned to a rope of sand, and may easily be avoided, without any flying to your imaginary infallibility of the church in all her proposals.

35. Ad. §. 14, 15. Doubting of a book received for canonical, may signify, either doubting whether it be canonical; or, supposing it to be canonical, whether it be true. If the former sense were yours, I must then again distinguish of the term, *received;* for it may signify, either received by some particular church, or by the present church universal, or the church of all ages. If you meant the word in either of the former senses, that which you say is not true. A man may justly and reasonably doubt of some texts, or some book received by some particular church, or by the universal church of this present time, whether it be canonical or no; and yet have just reason to believe, and no reason to doubt, but that other books are canonical. As Eusebius, perhaps, had reason to doubt of the Epistle of St. James; the church of Rome, in Jerome's time, of the Epistle to the Hebrews: and yet they did not doubt of all the books of the canon, nor had reason to do so. If by received, you mean received by the church of all ages, I grant, he that doubts of any one such book, hath as much reason to doubt of all. But yet here again I tell you, that it is possible a man may doubt of one such book, and yet not of all; because it is possible men may do not according to reason. If you meant your words in the latter sense, then, I confess, he that believes such a book to be canonical, *i. e.* the word of God, and yet (to make an impossible supposition) believes it not to be true, if he

will do according to reason, must doubt of all the rest, and believe none. For there being no greater reason to believe any thing true, than because God hath said it, nor no other reason to believe the Scripture to be true, but only because it is God's word; he that doubts of the truth of any thing said by God, hath as much reason to believe nothing that he says; and therefore, if he will do according to reason, neither must nor can believe any thing he says. And upon this ground you conclude rightly, that the infallibility of true Scripture must be universal, and not confined to points fundamental.

36. And this reason why we should not refuse to believe any part of Scripture, upon pretence that the matter of it is not fundamental, you confess to be convincing.—But the same reason you say is as convincing for the universal infallibility of the church: for (say you) unless she be infallible in all things, we cannot believe her in any one. —But by this reason your proselytes, knowing you are not infallible in all things, must not, nor cannot believe you in any thing: nay, you yourself must not believe yourself in any thing, because you know that you are not infallible in all things. Indeed, if you had said, we could not rationally believe her for her own sake, and upon her own word and authority in any thing, I should willingly grant the consequence. For an authority subject to error can be no firm or stable foundation of my belief in any thing; and if it were in any thing, then this authority, being one and the same in all proposals, I should have the same reason to believe all, that I have to believe one; and therefore must either do unreasonably, in believ-

ing any one thing, upon the sole warrant of this authority; or unreasonably, in not believing all things equally warranted by it. Let this therefore be granted; and what will come of it? Why then, you say, we cannot believe her in propounding canonical books. If you mean still (as you must do unless you play the sophister) not upon her own authority, I grant it: for we believe canonical books not upon the authority of the present church, but upon universal tradition. If you mean not at all, and that with reason we cannot believe these books to be canonical, which the church proposes, I deny it. There is no more consequence in the argument than in this: the devil is not infallible; therefore, if he says there is one God, I cannot believe him. No geometrician is infallible in all things, therefore not in these things which he demonstrates. Mr. Knot is not infallible in all things, therefore he may not believe that he wrote a book, entitled Charity Maintained.

37. But though the reply be good, protestants cannot make use of it, with any good coherence to this distinction, and some other doctrines of theirs: because they pretend to be able to tell what points are fundamental, and what not; and therefore, though they should believe Scripture erroneous in others, yet they might be sure it erred not in these.—To this I answer, that if, without dependance on Scripture, they did know what were fundamental, and what not, they might possibly believe the Scripture true in fundamentals, and erroneous in other things. But seeing they ground their belief, that such and such things only are fundamental, only upon Scripture, and

go about to prove their assertion true, only by Scripture; then must they suppose the Scripture true absolutely and in all things, or else the Scripture could not be a sufficient warrant to them to believe this thing, that these only points are fundamental. For who would not laugh at them if they should argue thus: the Scripture is true in something, the Scripture says that these points only are fundamental, therefore this is true, that these only are so? For every fresh man in logic knows, that from mere particulars nothing can be certainly concluded. But, on the other side, this reason is firm and demonstrative—the Scripture is true in all things; but the Scripture says, that these only points are the fundamentals of Christian religion; therefore, it is true that these only are so. So that the knowledge of fundamentals, being itself drawn from Scripture, is so far from warranting us to believe the Scripture is, or may be, in part true, and in part false; that itself can have no foundation, but the universal truth of Scripture. For, to be a fundamental truth, presupposes to be a truth; now I cannot know any doctrine to be a Divine and supernatural truth, or a true part of Christianity, but only because the Scripture says so, which is all true: therefore, much more can I not know it to be a fundamental truth.

38. Ad. §. 16. To this paragraph I answer—Though, the church being not infallible, I cannot believe her in every thing she says; yet I can and must believe her in every thing she proves, either by Scripture, reason, or universal tradition, be it fundamental, or be it not fundamental. This, you say—we cannot in points not fundamental, be-

cause in such we believe she may err:—but this I know, we can; because, though we may err in some things, yet she does not err in what she proves, though it be not fundamental. Again, you say—we cannot do it in fundamentals, because we must know what points be fundamental, before we go to learn of her.—Not so. But seeing faith comes by hearing, and by hearing those who give testimony to it, which none doth but the church, and the parts of it; I must learn of the church, or of some part of it, or I cannot know any thing fundamental or not fundamental. For how can I come to know, that there was such a man as Christ, that he taught such doctrine, that he and his apostles did such miracles in confirmation of it, that the Scripture is God's word, unless I be taught it? So then, the church is, though not a certain foundation and proof of my faith, yet a necessary introduction to it.

39. But the church's infallible direction extending only to fundamentals, unless I know them before I go to learn of her, I may be rather deluded than instructed by her.—The reason and connexion of this consequence, I fear neither I nor you do well understand. And besides, I must tell you, you are too bold in taking that which no man grants you—that the church is an infallible director in fundamentals. For if she were so, then must we not only learn fundamentals of her, but also learn of her what is fundamental, and take all for fundamental which she delivers to us as such. In the performance whereof, if I knew any one church to be infallible, I would quickly be of that church But, good Sir, you must needs do us this favour, to be so acute as to distinguish

between being infallible in fundamentals, and being an infallible guide in fundamentals. That there shall be always a church infallible in fundamentals, we easily grant; for it comes to no more but this—that there shall be always a church: but that there shall be always such a church, which is an infallible guide in fundamentals, this we deny. For this cannot be without settling a known infallibility in some one known society of Christians (as the Greek or the Roman, or some other church); by adhering to which guide, men might be guided to believe aright in all fundamentals. A man that were destitute of all means of communicating his thoughts to others, might yet, in himself and to himself, be infallible, but he could not be a guide to others. A man or a church that were invisible, so that none could know how to repair it for direction, could not be an infallible guide, and yet he might be in himself infallible. You see, then, there is a wide difference between these two; and therefore I must beseech you not to confound them, nor to take the one for the other.

40. But they that know what points are fundamental, otherwise than by the church's authority, learn not of the church.—Yes, they may learn of the church, that the Scripture is the word of God, and from the Scripture, that such points are fundamental, others are not so; and consequently learn, even of the church, even of your church, that all is not fundamental, nay, all is not true, which the church teacheth to be so. Neither do I see what hinders, but a man may learn of a church, how to confute the errors of that church which taught him: as well as of my master in

physic, or the mathematics, I may learn those rules and principles, by which I may confute my master's erroneous conclusion.

41. But you ask—If the church be not an infallible teacher, why are we commanded to hear, to seek, to obey the church?—I answer, for commands to seek the church, I have not yet met with any; and, I believe, you, if you were to shew them, would be yourself to seek. But yet, if you could produce some such, we might seek the church to many good purposes, without supposing her a guide infallible. And then for hearing and obeying the church, I would fain know, whether none be heard and obeyed, but those that are infallible; whether particular churches, governors, pastors, parents, be not to be heard and obeyed? Or whether all these be infallible? I wonder you will thrust upon us so often these worn-out objections, without taking notice of their answers.

42. Your argument from St. Austin's first place is a fallacy, *A dicto secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter:* If the whole church practise any of these things (matters of order and decency, for such only there he speaks of), to dispute whether that ought to be done, is insolent madness.—And from hence you infer—If the whole church practise any thing, to dispute whether it ought to be done, is insolent madness.—As if there were no difference between any thing, and any of these things? Or, as if I might not esteem it pride and folly, to contradict and disturb the church for matter of order, pertaining to the time, and place, and other circumstances of God's worship; and yet account it neither pride nor folly, to go about to reform er-

rors, which the church hath suffered to come in, and to vitiate the very substance of God's worship. It was a practice of the whole church in St. Augustine's time, and esteemed an apostolic tradition even by St. Augustine himself, that the eucharist should be administered to infants: tell me, Sir, I beseech you, had it been insolent madness to dispute against this practice, or had it not? If it had, how insolent and mad are you, that have not only disputed against it, but utterly abolished it? If it had not, then, as I say, you must understand St. Augustine's words, not simply of all things; but (as indeed he himself restrained them) of these things, of matter of order, decency, and uniformity.

43. In the next place, you tell us out of him—that that which hath been always kept, is most rightly esteemed to come from the apostles:—very right, and what then? Therefore the church cannot err in defining of controversies. Sir, I beseech you, when you write again, do us the favour to write nothing but syllogisms: for I find it still an extreme trouble to find out the concealed propositions, which are to connect the parts of your enthymemes. As now, for example, I profess unto you I am at my wits end, and have done my best endeavour, to find some glue, or sodder, or cement, or chain, or thread, or any thing to tie this antecedent and this consequent together, and at length am enforced to give it over, and cannot do it.

44. But the doctrines—that infants are to be baptized, and those that are baptized by heretics, are not to be rebaptized, are neither of them to be proved by Scripture: and yet, according to St.

Augustine, they are true doctrines, and we may be certain of them upon the authority of the church, which we could not be, unless the church were infallible; therefore the church is infallible.—I answer, that there is no repugnance, but we may be certain enough of the universal traditions of the ancient church; such as, in St. Augustine's account, these were, which here are spoken of, and yet not be certain enough of the definitions of the present church, unless you can shew (which I am sure you never can do) that the infallibility of the present church was always a tradition of the ancient church. Now your main business is to prove the present church infallible, not so much in consigning ancient tradition, as in defining emergent controversies. Again, it follows not, because the church's authority is warrant enough for us to believe some doctrine, touching which the Scripture is silent; therefore it is warrant enough to believe these, to which the Scripture seems repugnant. Now the doctrines, which St. Augustine received upon the church's authority, are of the first sort; the doctrines for which we deny your church's infallibility are of the second: and, therefore, though the church's authority might be strong enough to bear the weight which St. Augustine laid upon it, yet haply it may not be strong enough to bear that which you lay upon it; though it may support some doctrines without Scripture, yet surely not against it. And, last of all, to deal ingenuously with you and the world, I am not such an idolater of St. Augustine as to think a thing proved sufficiently, because he says it, nor that all his sentences are oracles; and particularly in this thing, that, whatsoever was prac-

tised or held by the universal church of his time, must needs have come from the apostles; though considering the nearness of his time to the apostles, I think it a good probable way, and therefore am apt enough to follow it, when I see no reason to the contrary: yet, I profess, I must have better satisfaction, before I can induce myself to hold it certain and infallible. And this, not because popery would come in at this door, as some have vainly feared, but because by the church universal of some time, and the church universal of other times, I see plain contradictions held and practised: both which could not come from the apostles; for then the apostles had been teachers of falsehood. And therefore, the belief or practice of the present universal church, can be no infallible proof, that the doctrine so believed, or the custom so practised, came from the apostles I instance in the doctrine of the Millenaries, and the eucharist's necessity for infants: both which doctrines have been taught by the consent of the eminent fathers of some ages, without any opposition from any of their contemporaries; and were delivered by them, not as doctors, but as witnesses; not as their opinions, but apostolic traditions. And therefore, measuring the doctrine of the church by all the rules which Cardinal Perron gives us for that purpose, both these doctrines must be acknowledged to have been the doctrines of the ancient church of some age or ages; and that the contrary doctrines were catholic at some other time, I believe you will not think it needful for me to prove. So that either I must say the apostles were fountains of contradictious doctrines, or that being the universal doctrine of

this present church, is no sufficient proof that it came originally from the apostles. Besides, who can warrant us that the universal traditions of the church were all apostolical? Seeing in that famous place for traditions, in Tertullian*—*Quicunque traditor*, any author whatsoever is founder good enough for them. And who can secure us that human inventions, and such as came *a quo-*

* De corona Militis. c. iii. &c. Where having recounted sundry unwritten traditions then observed by Christians, many whereof, by the way, (notwithstanding the council of Trent's profession, to "receive them and the written word with like affection of piety") are now rejected and neglected by the church of Rome: for example, immersion in baptism, tasting a mixture of milk and honey presently after, abstaining from baths for a week after; accounting it an impiety to pray kneeling on the Lord's day, or between Easter and Pentecost: I say, having reckoned up these and other traditions in chap. iii. he adds another in the fourth, of the veiling of women; and then adds, "since I find no law for this, it follows, that tradition must have given this observation to custom, which shall gain in time apostolical authority by the interpretation of the reason of it. By these examples, therefore, it is declared, that the observing of unwritten tradition, being confirmed by custom, may be defended. The perseverance of the observation being a good testimony of the goodness of the tradition. Now custom, even in civil affairs, where a law is wanting, passeth for a law. Neither is it material, whether it be grounded on Scripture, or reason, seeing reason is commendation enough for a law. Moreover, if law be grounded on reason, all that must be law, which is so grounded——*A quocunque productum*——Whosoever is the producer of it. Do ye think it is not lawful, *Omni fideli*, for every faithful man to conceive and constitute? provided he constitute only what is not repugnant to God's will, what is conducible for discipline, and available to salvation? seeing the Lord says, 'why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?'" And a little after, "this reason now demands saving the respect of the tradition——*A quocunque traditore censetur, nec authorem respiciens sed authoritatem;* from whatsoever tradition it comes, neither regarding the author, but the authority."

cunque traditore, might not, in short time, gain the reputation of apostolic? Seeing the direction then was, **Præcepta majoru mapostolicas traditiones quisque existimat.*

45. No less, you say, is St. Chrysostome for the infallible traditions of the church. But you were to prove the church infallible, not in her traditions (which we willingly grant, if they be as universal as the tradition of the undoubted books of Scripture is, to be as infallible as the Scripture is: for neither doth being written make the word of God the more infallible, nor being unwritten make it the less infallible:) not therefore in her universal traditions were you to prove the church infallible, but in all her decrees and definitions of controversies. To this point, when you speak, you shall have an answer; but hitherto you do but wander.

46. But let us see what St. Chrysostome says: "They (the apostles) delivered not all things in writing; (who denies it?) but many things also without writing; (who doubts of it?) and these also are worthy of belief." Yes, if we knew what they were. But many things are worthy of belief, which are not necessary to be believed: as that Julius Cæsar was emperor of Rome is a thing worthy of belief, being so well testified as it is, but yet it is not necessary to be believed; a man may be saved without it. Those many works which our Saviour did, which St. John supposes would not have been contained in a world of books, if they had been written; or if God, by some other means, had preserved the knowledge of them, had been as worthy to be believed, and

as necessary, as those that are written. But to shew you how much a more faithful keeper records are than report, those few that were written are preserved and believed; those infinitely more, that were not written, are all lost and vanished out of the memory of men. And seeing God in his providence hath not thought fit to preserve the memory of them, he hath freed us from the obligation of believing them: for every obligation ceaseth, when it becomes impossible. Who can doubt but the primitive Christians, to whom the epistles of the apostles were written, either of themselves understood or were instructed by the apostles, touching the sense of the obscure places of them? These traditive interpretations, had they been written and dispersed, as the Scriptures were, had without question been preserved as the Scriptures are. But, to shew how excellent a keeper of the tradition the church of Rome hath been, or even the catholic church; for want of writing they are all lost, nay, were all lost within a few ages after Christ: so that if we consult the ancient interpreters, we shall hardly find any two of them agree about the sense of any one of them. Cardinal Perron, in his Discourse of Traditions, having alleged this place for them, "Hold the traditions," &c. tells us, "we must not answer that St. Paul speaks here only of such traditions which (though not in this Epist. to Thess. yet) were afterwards written, and in other books of Scripture: because it is upon occasion of tradition (touching the cause of the hinderance of the coming of Antichrist) which was never written, that he lays this injunction upon them, to hold the traditions." Well let us grant this argument

good, and concluding; and that the church of the Thessalonians, or the catholic church (for what St. Paul writ to one church, he writ to all) were to hold some unwritten traditions, and among the rest, what was the cause of the hinderance of the coming of Antichrist. But what if they did not perform their duty in this point, but suffered this tradition to be lost, out of the memory of the church? Shall we not conclude, that seeing God would not suffer any thing necessary to salvation to be lost, and he hath suffered this tradition to be lost, therefore the knowledge or belief of it, though it were a profitable thing, yet it was not necessary? I hope you will not challenge such authority over us, as to oblige us to impossibilities, to do that which you cannot do yourselves: it is therefore requisite that you make this command possible to be obeyed, before you require obedience unto it. Are you able then to instruct us so well, as to be fit to say unto us, Now ye know what withholdeth? Or do you yourselves know that ye may instruct us? Can ye, or dare you say, this or this was this hinderance which St. Paul here meant, and all men under pain of damnation are to believe it? Or if you cannot, (as I am certain you cannot) go then, and vaunt your church, for the only watchful, faithful, infallible keeper of the apostles' traditions; when here this very tradition, which here in particular was deposited with the Thessalonians and the primitive church, you have utterly lost it; so that there is no footstep or print of it remaining, which, with Divine faith, we may rely upon. Blessed therefore be the goodness of God, who, seeing that what was not written was in such danger to

be lost, took order, that what was necessary should be written! St. Chrysostome's counsel, therefore, of accounting the church's traditions worthy of belief, we are willing to obey: and, if you can of any thing make it appear that it is tradition, we will seek no farther. But this we say withal, that we are persuaded you cannot make this appear in any thing, but only in the canon of Scripture; and that there is nothing now extant, and to be known by us, which can put in so good plea to be the unwritten word of God, as the unquestioned books of canonical Scripture, to be the written word of God.

47. You conclude this paragraph with a sentence of St. Augustine, who says, "The church doth not approve, nor dissemble, nor do those things which are against faith or good life: and from hence you conclude, that it never has done so, nor ever can do so." But though the argument hold in logic *a non posse, ad non esse*, yet I never heard that it would hold back again, *a non esse, ad non posse*. The church cannot do this, therefore it does not, follows with good consequence: but the church doth not this, therefore it shall never do it, nor can ever do it, this I believe will hardly follow. In the epistle next before to the same Januarius, writing of the same matter, he hath these words: "It remains, that the thing you inquire of must be of that third kind of things, which are different in divers places. Let every one, therefore, do that which he finds done in the church to which he comes; for none of them is against faith or good manners." And why do you not infer from hence, that—no particular church can bring up any custom that is against faith or good man-

ners? Certainly this consequence hath as good reason for it as the former. If a man say of the church of England, (what St. Augustine of the church) that she neither approves nor dissembles, nor doth any thing against faith or good manners, would you collect presently, that this man did either make or think the church of England infallible? Furthermore, it is observable out of this, and the former epistle, that this church, which did not (as St. Augustine, according to you, thought) approve or dissemble, or do any thing against faith or a good life, did not tolerate and dissemble vain superstitions and human presumptions, and suffer all places to be full of them, and to be exacted as, nay more severely than, the commandments of God himself. This St. Augustine himself professeth in this very epistle. "This (saith he) I do infinitely grieve at, that many most wholesome precepts of the Divine Scripture are little regarded; and in the meantime all is so full of so many presumptions, that he is more grievously found fault with, who during his octaves toucheth the earth with his naked foot, than he that shall bury his soul in drunkenness." Of these, he says, that "they were neither contained in Scripture, decreed by councils, nor corroborated by the custom of the universal church: and though not against faith, yet unprofitable burdens of Christian liberty, which made the condition of the Jews more tolerable than that of Christians." And therefore he professeth of them, *Approbare non possum*, I cannot approve them. And, *ubi facultas tribuitur, resecanda existimo;* I think they are to be cut off, wheresoever we have power.—Yet so deeply were they rooted, and spread so far, through the indis-

creet devotion of the people, always more prone to superstition than true piety, and through the connivance of the governors, who should have strangled them at their birth, that himself, though he grieved at them, and could not allow them, yet for fear of offence he durst not speak against them. *Multa hujusmodi, propter nollullarum vel sanctarum vel turbulentarum personarum scandala, devitanda, liberius improbare non audeo:* many of these things for fear of scandalizing many holy persons, or provoking those that are turbulent, I dare not freely disallow. Nay, the catholic church itself did see, and dissemble, and tolerate them; for these are the things of which he presently says after, "the church of God (and you will have him speak of the true catholic church), placed between chaff and tares, tolerates many things." Which was directly against the command of the Holy Spirit, given the church by St. Paul, to "stand fast in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made her free," and not to suffer herself to be brought in bondage to these servile burdens. Our Saviour tells the scribes and pharisees, that "in vain they worshipped God, teaching for doctrines men's commandments: for that, laying aside the commandments of God, they held the traditions of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like things." Certainly, that which St. Augustine complains of as the general fault of Christians of his time, was parallel to this: *Multa* (saith he) *quæ in divinis libris saluberrime præcepta sunt, minus curantur;* this, I suppose, I may very well render in our Saviour's words, "the commandments of God are laid aside;" and then, *Tam multis presumptionibus sic plena sunt omnia,* all

things, or all places, are so full of so many presumptions, and those exacted with such severity, nay, with tyranny, that he was more severely censured, who in the time of his octaves touched the earth with his naked feet, than he which drowned and buried his soul in drink.—Certainly, if this be not to teach for doctrines men's commandments, I know not what is: and therefore these superstitious Christians might be said to worship God in vain, as well as the scribes and pharisees. And yet great variety of superstitions of this kind were then already spread over the church, being different in divers places. This is plain from these words of St. Augustine concerning them, *diversorum locorum diversis moribus innumerabiliter variantur;* and apparent, because the stream of them was grown so violent, that he durst not oppose it; *liberius improbare non audeo,* I dare not freely speak against them. So that to say the catholic church tolerated all this, and, for fear of offence, durst not abrogate or condemn it; is to say (if we judge rightly of it) that the church, with silence and connivance, generally tolerated Christians to worship God in vain. Now, how this tolerating of universal superstition in the church, can consist with the assistance and direction of God's omnipotent Spirit to guard it from superstition, and with the accomplishment of that pretended prophecy of the church, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night;" besides, how these superstitions, being thus nourished, cherished, and strengthened by the practice of the most, and urged with great violence upon others, as the commandments of God, and but fearfully opposed or contradicted by

any, might in time take such deep root, and spread their branches so far, as to pass for universal customs of the church, he that does not see, sees nothing. Especially, considering the catching and contagious nature of this sin, and how fast ill weeds spread, and how true and experimented that rule is of the historian, *Exempla non consistunt ubi incipiunt, sed quamlibet in tenuem recepta tramitem latissime evagandi sibi faciunt potestatem.* Nay, that some such superstition had not already, even in St. Augustine's time, prevailed so far, as to be *consuetudine universa ecclesiæ roboratum*, who can doubt that considers, that the practice of communicating infants, had even then got the credit and authority, not only of an universal church, but also of an apostolic tradition?

48. But (you will say) notwithstanding all this, St. Augustine here warrants us, that the church can never either approve, or dissemble, or practise any thing against faith or good life, and so long you may rest securely upon it.—Yea, but the same St. Augustine tells us, in the same place, that "the church may tolerate human presumptions, and vain superstitions, and those urged more severely than the commandments of God:" and whether superstition be a sin or no, I appeal to our Saviour's words before cited, and to the consent of your schoolmen. Besides, if we consider it rightly, we shall find, that the church is not truly said only to tolerate these things, but rather that a part, and far the lesser, tolerated and dissembled them in silence, and a part, and a far greater, publicly avowed and practised them, and urged them upon others with great violence, and yet continued still a part of the church. Now,

why the whole church might not continue the church, and yet do so, as well as a part of the church might continue a part of it, and yet do so, I desire you to inform me.

49. But now, after all this ado, what if St. Augustine says not this which is pretended of the church; viz. that she neither approves, nor dissembles, nor practises any thing against faith or good life, but only of good men in the church; certainly, though some copies read as you would have it, yet you should not have dissembled, that others read the place otherwise; viz. *ecclesia multa tolerat; et tamen quæ sunt contra fidem et bonam vitam, nec bonus approbat*, &c.; the church tolerates many things, and yet what is against faith or good life, a good man will neither approve, nor dissemble, nor practise.

50. Ad. §. 17. That Abraham begat Isaac, is a point very far from being fundamental; and yet, I hope, you will grant that protestants, believing Scripture to be the word of God, may be certain enough of the truth and certainty of it: for what if they say that the catholic church, and much more themselves, may possibly err in some unfundamental points, is it therefore consequent they can be certain of none such? What if a wiser man than I may mistake the sense of some obscure place of Aristotle, may I not therefore, without any arrogance or inconsequence, conceive myself certain that I understand him in some plain places, which carry their sense before them? And then for points fundamental, to what purpose do you say, that—we must first know what they be, before we can be assured that we cannot err in understanding the Scripture—when we pretend not

at all to any assurance that we cannot err, but only to a sufficient certainty that we do not err, but rightly understand those things that are plain, whether fundamental or not fundamental; that "God is, and is a rewarder of them that seek him;" that there is no salvation but by faith in Christ; that by repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ, remission of sins may be obtained; that there shall be a resurrection of the body: these we conceive both true, because the Scripture says so, and truths fundamental, because they are necessary parts of the gospel, whereof our Saviour says, *Qui non crediderit, damnabitur.* All which we either learn from Scripture immediately, or learn of those that learn it of Scripture; so that neither learned nor unlearned pretend to know these things independently of Scripture. And therefore in imputing this to us, you cannot excuse yourself from having done us a palpable injury.

51. Ad. §. 18. And I urge you as mainly as you urge Dr. Potter, and other protestants, that you tell us all the traditions, and all the definitions of the church are fundamental points, and we cannot wrest from you—a list in particular of all such traditions and definitions—without which, no man can tell whether or no he err in points fundamental, and be capable of salvation (for, I hope, erring in our fundamentals is no more exclusive of salvation than erring in yours). And, which is most lamentable, instead of giving us such a catalogue, you also fall to wrangle among yourselves about the making of it; some of you, as I have said above, holding some things to be matters of faith.

52. Ad. §. 19. I answer, that these differences between protestants concerning errors damnable and not damnable, truths fundamental and not fundamental, may easily be reconciled. For either the error they speak of may be purely and simply involuntary, or it may be in respect of the cause of it voluntary. If the cause of it be in some voluntary and avoidable fault, the error is itself sinful, and consequently in its own nature damnable; as if, by negligence in seeking the truth, by unwillingness to find it, by pride, by obstinacy, by desiring that religion should be true which suits best with my ends, by fear of men's ill opinion, or any other worldly fear, or any other worldly hope, I betray myself to any error contrary to any Divine revealed truth, that error may be justly styled a sin, and consequently of itself to such an one damnable. But if I be guilty of none of these faults, but be desirous to know the truth, and diligent in seeking it, and advise not at all with flesh and blood about the choice of my opinions, but only with God, and that reason that he hath given me: if I be thus qualified, and yet through human infirmity fall into error, that error cannot be damnable. Again, the party erring may be conceived either to die with contrition, for all his sins known and unknown, or without it; if he die without it, this error in itself damnable will be likewise so unto him: if he die with contrition, (as his error can be no impediment but he may) his error, though in itself damnable to him, according to your doctrine, will not prove so. And therefore, some of those authors, whom you quote, speaking of errors whereunto men were betrayed, or wherein they were kept by their fault, or vice

or passion (as for the most part men are); others speaking of them, as errors simply and purely involuntary, and the effects of human infirmity; some, as they were retracted by contrition (to use your own phrase); others, as they were not; no marvel that they have passed upon them, some a heavier, and some a milder, some an absolving, and some a condemning sentence. The least of all these errors, which here you mention, having malice enough too frequently mixed with it, to sink a man deep enough into hell; and the greatest of them all being, according to your principles, either no fault at all, or venial, where there is no malice of the will conjoined with it. And if it be, yet, as the most malignant poison will not poison him that receives with it a more powerful antidote: so, I am confident, your own doctrine will force you to confess, that whosoever dies with faith in Christ, and contrition for all sins, known and unknown (in which heap all his sinful errors must be comprised), can no more be hurt by any the most malignant and pestilent error, than St. Paul by the viper which he shook off into the fire. Now touching the " necessity of repentance from dead works, and faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world," they all agree; and therefore you cannot deny, but they agree about all that is simply necessary. Moreover, though, if they should go about to choose out of Scripture all those propositions and doctrines which integrate and make up the body of Christian religion, peradventure there would not be so exact agreement amongst them, as some say there was between the seventy interpreters, in translating the Old Testament: yet thus far, without con-

troversy, they do all agree, that in the Bible all these things are contained, and therefore, that whosoever doth truly and sincerely believe the Scripture, must of necessity, either in hypothesi, or at least in thesi; either formally, or at least virtually; either explicitly, or at least implicitly; either in act, or at least in preparation of mind, believe all things fundamental. It being not fundamental, nor required of Almighty God, to believe the true sense of Scripture in all places, but only that we should endeavour to do so, and be prepared in mind to do so, whensoever it shall be sufficiently propounded to us. Suppose a man in some disease were prescribed a medicine, consisting of twenty ingredients, and he, advising with physicians, should find them differing in opinion about it, some of them telling him that all the ingredients were absolutely necessary; some, that only some of them were necessary, the rest only profitable, and requisite *ad melius esse;* lastly, some, that some only were necessary, some profitable, and the rest superfluous, yet not hurtful; yet all with one accord agreeing in this, that—the whole receipt had in it all things necessary for the recovery of his health, and that, if he made use of it, he should infallibly find it successful; what wise man would not think they agreed sufficiently for his direction to the recovery of health? Just so these protestant doctors, with whose discords you make such tragedies; agreeing in thesi thus far—that the "Scripture evidently contains all things necessary to salvation," both for matter of faith, and of practice; and that whosoever believes it, and endeavours to find the true sense of it, and to conform his life unto it, shall certainly perform

all things necessary to salvation, and undoubtedly be saved; agreeing, I say, thus far, what matters it for the direction of men to salvation, though they differ in opinion, touching what points are absolutely necessary, and what not? What errors absolutely repugnant to salvation, and what not? Especially considering, that although they differ about the question of the necessity of these truths, yet for the most part they agree in this, that truths they are, and profitable at least, though not simply necessary. And though they differ in the question, whether the contrary errors be destructive of salvation, or no; yet in this they consent, that errors they are, and hurtful to religion, though not destructive of salvation. Now that which God requires of us, is this, that we should believe the doctrine of the gospel to be truths, not all necessary truths, for all are not so; and consequently, the repugnant errors to be falsehoods; yet not all such falsehoods, as unavoidably draw with them damnation upon all that hold them; for all do not so.

53. Yea, but you say—it is very requisite we should agree upon a particular catalogue of fundamental points; for without such a catalogue, no man can be assured whether or no he hath faith sufficient to salvation.—This I utterly deny, as a thing evidently false, and I wonder you should content yourself magisterially to say so, without offering any proof of it. I might much more justly think it enough barely to deny it, without refutation, but I will not: thus, therefore, I argue against it.

Without being able to make a catalogue of fundamentals, I may be assured of the truth of this

contains all necessary points of faith," and know that I believe explicitly all that is expressed in Scripture, and implicitly all that is contained in them: now he that believes all this, must of necessity believe all things necessary: therefore, without being able to make a catalogue of fundamentals, I may be assured that I believe all things necessary, and consequently that my faith is sufficient.

I said, of the truth of this assertion, "if it be true:" because I will not here enter into the question of the truth of it, it being sufficient for my present purpose, that it may be true, and may be believed without any dependance upon a catalogue of fundamentals: and therefore, if this be all your reason to demand a particular catalogue of fundamentals, we cannot but think your demand unreasonable. Especially, having yourself expressed the cause of the difficulty of it, and that is—because Scripture doth deliver Divine truths, but seldom qualifies them, or declares whether they be or be not absolutely necessary to salvation.—Yet not so seldom, but that out of it I could give you an abstract of the essential parts of Christianity, if it were necessary: but I have shewed it not so by confuting your reason, pretended for the necessity of it, and at this time I have no leisure to do you courtesies that are so troublesome to myself. Yet thus much I will promise, that when you deliver a particular catalogue of your church's proposals with one hand, you shall receive a particular catalogue of what I conceive fundamental with the other: for, as yet, I see no such fair proceeding as you talk of, nor any performance on your own part of that which so clamorously you require on ours. For, as for

the catalogue which here you have given us, in saying—you are obliged under pain of damnation to believe whatsoever the catholic visible church of Christ proposeth as revealed by Almighty God—it is like a covey of one partridge, or a flock of one sheep, or a fleet composed of one ship, or an army of one man. The author of Charity Mistaken demands a particular catalogue of fundamental points; and we (say you) again and again demand such a catalogue. And surely, if this one proposition, which here you think to stop our mouths with, be a catalogue, yet at least such a catalogue it is not, and therefore as yet you have not performed what you require. For, if to set down such a proposition, wherein are comprised all points taught by us to be necessary to salvation, will serve you instead of a catalogue, you shall have catalogues enough. As we are obliged to believe all, under pain of damnation, which God commands us to believe: there is one catalogue. We are obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe all, whereof we may be sufficiently assured that Christ taught it his apostles, his apostles the church: there is another. We are obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe God's word, and all contained in it to be true: there is a third. If these generalities will not satisfy you, but you will be importuning us to tell you in particular, what those doctrines are which Christ taught his apostles, and his apostles the church, what points are contained in God's word; then I beseech you do us reason, and give us a particular and exact inventory of all your church-proposals, without leaving out, or adding any; such an one which all the doctors of your church will subscribe to; and

if you receive not then a catalogue of fundamentals, I for my part will give you leave to proclaim us bankrupts.

54. Besides this deceitful generality of your catalogue (as you call it) another main fault we find with it, that it is extremely ambiguous; and therefore, to draw you out of the clouds, give me leave to propose some questions to you concerning it. I would know, therefore, whether, by believing, you mean explicitly or implicitly? If you mean implicitly, I would know, whether your church's infallibility be, under pain of damnation, to be believed explicitly, or no? Whether any other point or points besides this, be under the same penalty, to be believed explicitly, or no? and if any, what they be? I would know what you esteem the proposal of the catholic visible church? In particular, whether the decree of a pope *ex cathedra*, that is, with an intent to oblige all Christians by it, be a sufficient and an obliging proposal? Whether men, without danger of damnation, may examine such a decree, and, if they think they have just cause, refuse to obey it? Whether the decree of a council, without the pope's confirmation, be such an obliging proposal, or no? Whether it be so in case there be no pope, or in case it be doubtful who is pope? Whether the decree of a general council confirmed by the pope be such a proposal, and whether he be a heretic that thinks otherwise? Whether the decree of a particular council confirmed by the pope, be such a proposal? Whether the general uncondemned practice of the church for some ages be such a sufficient proposition? Whether the consent of the most eminent fathers of any age, agree-

ing in the affirmation of any doctrine, not contradicted by any of their contemporaries, be a sufficient proposition? Whether the fathers' testifying such or such a doctrine or practice to be a tradition, or to be the doctrine or practice of the church, be a sufficient assurance that it is so? Whether we be bound, under pain of damnation, to believe every text of the vulgar Bible, now authorized by the Roman church, to be the true translation of the originals of the prophets, and evangelists, and apostles, without any the least alteration? Whether they that lived when the Bible of Sixtus was set forth, were bound, under pain of damnation, to believe the same of that? And if not of that, of what Bible they were bound to believe it? Whether the catholic visible church be always that society of Christians which adheres to the Bishop of Rome? Whether every Christian, that hath ability and opportunity, be not bound to endeavour to know explicitly the proposals of the church? Whether implicit faith in the church's veracity, will not save him that actually and explicitly disbelieves some doctrine of the church, not knowing it to be so: and actually believes some damnable heresy, as, that God hath the shape of a man? Whether an ignorant man be bound to believe any point to be decreed by the church, when his priest or ghostly father assures him it is so? Whether his ghostly father may not err in telling him so, and whether any man can be obliged, under pain of damnation, to believe an error? Whether he be bound to believe such a thing defined, when a number of priests, perhaps ten or twenty, tell him it is so? And what assurance he can have, that they neither err, nor

deceive him, in this matter? Why implicit faith in Christ or the Scripture should not suffice for a man's salvation, as well as implicit faith in the church? Whether, when you say—whatsoever the church proposeth—you mean, all that ever she proposed, or that only which she now proposeth; and whether she now proposeth all that ever she did propose? Whether all the books of canonical Scripture were sufficiently declared to the church to be so, and proposed as such by the apostles? And if not, from whom the church had this declaration afterwards? If so, whether all men, ever since the apostles' time, were bound, under pain of damnation, to believe the Epistle of St. James, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, to be canonical? at least, not to disbelieve it, and believe the contrary? Lastly, why it is not sufficient for any man's salvation to use the best means he can to inform his conscience, and to follow the direction of it? To all these demands when you have given fair and ingenuous answers, you shall hear farther from me.

55. Ad. §. 20. At the first entrance into this paragraph, from our own doctrine—That the church cannot err in points necessary, it is concluded, if we are wise, we must forsake it in nothing, lest we should forsake it in something necessary.—To which I answer, first, that the supposition, as you understand it, is falsely imposed upon us, and, as we understand it, will do you no service. For when we say that there shall be a church always, somewhere or other, unerring in fundamentals, our meaning is but this, that there shall be always a church to the very being whereof it is repugnant that it should err in fundamentals; for if it should

do so, it would want the very essence of a church, and therefore cease to be a church. But we never annexed this privilege to any one church of any one denomination, as the Greek or the Roman church; which if we had done, and set up some settled certain society of Christians, distinguishable from all others by adhering to such a bishop for our guide in fundamentals, then indeed, and then only, might you with some colour, though not with certainty, have concluded that we could not, in wisdom—forsake this church in any point, for fear of forsaking it in a necessary point.—But now that we say not this of any one determinate church, which alone can perform the office of guide or director, but indefinitely of the church, meaning no more but this—that there shall be always, in some place or other, some church that errs not in fundamentals; will you conclude from hence, that we cannot in wisdom forsake this or that, the Roman or the Greek church, for fear of erring in fundamentals?

56. Yea, you may say, (for I will make the best I can of all your arguments) that this church, thus unerring in fundamentals, when Luther arose, was by our confession the Roman; and therefore we ought not in wisdom to have departed from it in any thing. I answer, First, That we confess no such thing, that the church of Rome was then this church, but only a part of it, and that the most corrupted, and most incorrigible. Secondly, That if, by adhering to that church, we could have been thus far secured, this argument had some show of reason. But seeing we are not warranted thus much by any privilege of that church, that she cannot err fundamentally, but only from Scrip-

heinously, collect our hope, that the truths she retains, and the practice of them, may prove an antidote to her against the errors which she maintains in such persons, as, in simplicity of heart, follow this Absalom; we should then do against the light of our conscience, and so sin damnably, if we should not abandon the profession of her errors, though not fundamental. Neither can we thus conclude, we may safely hold with the church of Rome in all her points, for she cannot err damnably; for this is false, she may, though, perhaps, she doth not; but rather thus: these points of Christianity, which have in them the nature of antidotes against the poison of all sins and errors, the church of Rome, though otherwise much corrupted, still retains; therefore we hope she errs not fundamentally, but still remains a part of the church. But this can be no warrant to us to think with her in all things; seeing the very same Scripture, which puts us in hope she errs not fundamentally, assures us that in many things, and those of great moment, she errs very grievously. And these errors, though to them that believe them, we hope they will not be pernicious, yet the professing of them against conscience, could not but bring to us certain damnation. As for the fear of departing from some fundamental truths withal, while we depart from her errors; haply it might work upon us, if adhering to her might secure us from it, and if nothing else could: but both these are false. For, First, Adhering to her in all things cannot secure us from erring in fundamentals: because though *de facto* we hope she doth not err, yet we know no privileges she

hath but she may err in them herself: and therefore we had need have better security hereof than her bare authority. Then, Secondly, Without dependance on her at all, we may be secured that we do not err fundamentally: I mean, by believing all things plainly set down in Scripture, wherein all necessary, and most things profitable, are plainly delivered. Suppose I were travelling to London, and knew two ways thither; the one very safe and convenient, the other very inconvenient and dangerous, but yet a way to London; and that I overtook a passenger on the way, who himself believed, and would fain persuade me, there was no other way but the worse, and would persuade me to accompany him in it, because I confessed his way, though very inconvenient and very dangerous, yet a way; so that going that way we might come to our journey's end by the consent of both parties; but he believed my way to be none at all; and therefore I might justly fear, lest out of a desire of leaving the worst way, I left the true and the only way: if now I should not be more secure upon my own knowledge, than frighted by this fallacy, would you not beg me for a fool? Just so might you think of us, if we would be frighted out of our own knowledge by this bugbear. For the only and the main reason why we believe you not to err in fundamentals, is your holding the doctrine of faith in Christ and repentance: which knowing we hold as well as you, notwithstanding our departure from you, we must needs know that we do not err in fundamentals, as well as we know that you in some sort do not err in fundamentals, and therefore cannot possibly fear the contrary. Yet let us be

more liberal to you, and grant that which can never be proved, that God had said in plain terms, —The church of Rome shall never destroy the foundation—but withal had said—That it might and would lay much hay and stubble upon it: that you should never hold any error destructive of salvation, but yet many that were prejudicial to edification: I demand, might we have dispensed with ourselves in the believing and professing these errors in regard of the smallness of them? Or, had it not been a damnable sin to do so, though the errors in themselves were not damnable? had we not had as plain direction to depart from you in some things profitable, as to adhere to you in things necessary? In the beginning of your book, when it was for your purpose to have it so, the greatness or smallness of the matter was not considerable, the evidence of the revelation was all in all. But here must we err with you in small things, for fear of losing your direction in greater? and for fear of departing too far from you, not go from you at all, even where we see plainly that you have departed from the truth?

57. Beyond all this, I say, that this which you say in wisdom we are to do, is not only unlawful, but, if we will proceed according to reason, impossible. I mean to adhere to you in all things, having no other ground for it, but because you are (as we will now suppose) infallible in some things, that is, in fundamentals. For whether by skill in architecture a large structure may be supported by a narrow foundation, I know not; but sure I am, in reason, no conclusion can be larger than the principles on which it is founded. And therefore, if I consider what I do, and be per-

suaded that your infallibility is but limited, and particular, and partial, my adherence upon this ground cannot possibly be absolute, and universal, and total. I am confident, that should I meet with such a man among you (as I am well assured there be many) that would grant your church infallible only in fundamentals, which what they are he knows not, and therefore upon this only reason adheres to you in all things; I say that I am confident that it may be demonstrated, that such a man adheres to you with a fiducial and certain assent in nothing. To make this clear (because at the first hearing it may seem strange) give me leave, good Sir, to suppose you the man, and to propose to you a few questions, and to give for you such answers to them, as upon this ground you must of necessity give, were you present with me. First, Supposing you hold your church infallible in fundamentals, obnoxious to error in other things, and that you know not what points are fundamental, I demand, C. Why do you believe the doctrine of transubstantiation? K. Because the church hath taught it, which is infallible. C. What! Infallible in all things, or only in fundamentals? K. In fundamentals only. C. Then in other points she may err? K. She may. C. And do you know what points are fundamental, what not? K. No, and therefore I believe her in all things, lest I should disbelieve her in fundamentals C. How know you then, whether this be a fundamental point or no? K. I know not. C. It may be then (for aught you know) an unfundamental point? K. Yes, it may be so. C. And in these, you said, the church may err? K. Yes, I did so. C. Then possibly it

may err in this? K. It may be so. C. Then what certainty have you that it does not err in it? K. None at all; but upon this supposition, that this is a fundamental. C. And this supposition you are uncertain of? K. Yes, I told you so before. C. And therefore you can have no certainty of that which depends upon this uncertainty, saving only a suppositive certainty if it be a fundamental truth; which is, in plain English, to say, you are certain it is true, if it be both true and necessary. Verily, Sir, if you have no better faith than this, you are no catholic. K. Good words, I pray! I am so, and, God willing, will be so. C. You mean in outward profession and practice, but in belief you are not, no more than a protestant is a catholic. For every protestant yields such a kind of assent to all the proposals of the church; for surely they believe them true, if they be fundamental truths. And therefore you must either believe the church infallible in all her proposals, be they foundations, or be they superstructions; or you must believe all fundamental which she proposes, or else you are no catholic. K. But I have been taught, that, seeing I believed the church infallible in points necessary, in wisdom I was to believe her in every thing. C. That was a pretty plausible inducement to bring you hither; but now you are here you must go farther, and believe her infallible in all things, or else you were as good go back again, which will be a great disparagement to you, and draw upon you both the bitter and implacable hatred of our part, and even, with your own, the imputation of rashness and levity. You see, I hope, by this time, that though a man did believe your church infallible in fundamentals,

yet he hath no reason to do you the courtesy of believing all her proposals; nay, if he be ignorant what these fundamentals are, he hath no certain ground to believe her, upon her authority, in any thing. And whereas, you say, it can be no imprudence to err with the church; I say, it may be very great imprudence, if the question be, whether we should err with the present church, or hold true with God Almighty.

58. But we are, under pain of damnation, to believe and obey her in greater things, and therefore cannot in wisdom suspect her credit in matters of less moment.—*Ans.* I have told you already, that this is falsely to suppose, that we grant that, in some certain points, some certain church is infallibly assisted, and under pain of damnation to be obeyed: whereas all that we say is this; that, in some place or other, some church there shall be, which shall retain all necessary truths. Yet, if your suppositions were true, I would not grant your conclusion, but with this exception, unless the matter were past suspicion, and apparently certain, that in these things I cannot believe God and believe the church. For then I hope you will grant, that be the thing of never so little moment; were it, for instance, but that St. Paul left his cloak at Troas, yet I were not to gratify the church so far, as for her sake to disbelieve what God himself hath revealed.

59. Whereas you say—Since we are undoubtedly obliged to believe her in fundamentals, and cannot know precisely what those fundamentals be, we cannot without hazard of our souls leave her in any point—I answer, First, That this argument proceeds upon the same false ground with

the former. And then, that I have told you formerly, that you fear where no fear is; and though we know not precisely just how much is fundamental, yet we know that the Scripture contains all fundamentals, and more too; and therefore that, in believing that, we believe all fundamentals, and more too: and, consequently, in departing from you can be in no danger of departing from that which may prove a fundamental truth: for we are well assured that certain errors can never prove fundamental truths.

60. Whereas you add that—That visible church, which cannot err in fundamentals, propounds all her definitions without distinction to be believed under anathemas.—*Ans.* Again you beg the question supposing untruly, that there is any—that visible church. I mean any visible church of one denomination, which cannot err in points fundamental. Secondly, Proposing definitions to be believed under anathemas, is no good argument that the propounders conceive themselves infallible; but only that they conceive the doctrine they condemn is evidently damnable. A plain proof hereof is this, that particular councils, nay, particular men, have been very liberal of their anathemas, which yet were never conceived infallible, either by others or themselves. If any man should now deny Christ to be the Saviour of the world, or deny the resurrection, I should make no great scruple of anathematizing his doctrine, and yet am very far from dreaming of infallibility.

61. And for the visible church's holding it a point necessary to salvation, that we believe she cannot err, I know no such tenet; unless by the church, you mean the Roman church, which you

have as much reason to do, as that petty king in Afric hath, to think himself king of all the world. And therefore your telling us—If she speak true, what danger is it not to believe her? And if false, that it is not dangerous to believe her—is somewhat like your pope's setting your lawyers to dispute whether Constantine's donation were valid or no; whereas the matter of fact was the far greater question—whether there were any such donation, or rather when, without question, there was none such. That you may not seem to delude us in like manner, make it appear that the visible church doth hold so as you pretend, and then, whether it be true or false, we will consider afterwards: but, for the present, with this invisible tenet of the visible church, we will trouble ourselves no farther.

62. The effect of the next argument is this—I cannot without grievous sin disobey the church, unless I know she commands those things which are not in her power to command; and how far this power extends, none can better inform me than the church; therefore, I am to obey, so far as the church requires my obedience.—I answer, First, That neither hath the catholic church, but only a corrupt part of it, declared herself, nor required our obedience, in the points contested among us: this, therefore, is falsely and vainly supposed here by you, being one of the greatest questions amongst us. Then, Secondly, That God can better inform us what are the limits of the church's power than the church herself; that is, than the Roman clergy, who being men subject to the same passions with other men, why they should be thought the best judges in their own

cause, I do not well understand; but yet we oppose against them no human decisive judges, nor any sect or person, but only God and his word. And therefore it is in vain to say that—in following her, you shall be sooner excused than in following any sect or man applying scriptures against her doctrine, inasmuch as we never went about to arrogate to ourselves that infallibility or absolute authority, which we take away from you. But if you would have spoken to the purpose, you should have said, that in following her you should sooner have been excused, than in cleaving to the Scripture, and to God himself.

63. Whereas, you say—The fearful examples of innumerable persons, who forsaking the church, upon pretence of her errors, have failed even in fundamental points, ought to deter all Christians from opposing her in any one doctrine or practice; this is just as if you should say, divers men have fallen into Scylla, with going too far from Charybdis; be sure, therefore, you keep close to Charybdis: divers, leaving prodigality, have fallen into covetousness; therefore be you constant to prodigality; many have fallen from worshipping God perversely and foolishly, not to worship him at all; from worshipping many gods, to worshipping none; this, therefore, ought to deter men from leaving superstition or idolatry, for fear of falling into atheism and impiety. This is your counsel and sophistry: but God says, clean contrary—Take heed you swerve not either to the right hand or to the left; you must not do evil that good may come thereon; therefore, neither that you may avoid a greater evil, you must not be obstinate in a certain error, for fear of an un-

certain. What if some, forsaking the church of Rome, have forsaken fundamental truths? Was this because they forsook the church of Rome? No sure, this is *non causa pro causa;* for else all that have forsaken that church should have done so, which we say they have not: but because they went too far from her, the golden mean, the narrow way, is hard to be found, and hard to be kept: hard, but not impossible; hard, but yet you must not please yourself out of it, though you err on the right hand, though you offend on the milder part; for this is the only way "that leads to life, and few there be that find it." It is true, if we said there was no danger in being of the Ro man church, and there were danger in leaving it, it were madness to persuade any man to believe it. But we protest and proclaim the contrary, and that we have very little hope of their salvation, who, either out of negligence in seeking the truth, or unwillingness to find it, live and die in the errors and impieties of that church; and therefore cannot but conceive those fears to be most foolish and ridiculous, which persuade men to be constant in one way to hell, lest haply, if they leave it, they should fall into another.

64. But not only others, but even protestants themselves, whose example ought most to move us, pretending to reform the church, are come to affirm that she perished for many ages, which Dr. Potter cannot deny to be a fundamental error, against the article of the Creed, I believe the catholic church, seeing he affirms—Donatists erred fundamentally in confining it to Africa.—To this I answer, First, That the error of the Donatists was not, that they held it possible that some, or

many, or most parts of Christendom, might fall away from Christianity, and that the church may lose much of her amplitude, and be contracted to a narrow compass, in comparison of her former extent; which is proved not only possible, but certain, by irrefragable experience: for who knows not that gentilism, and Mahometanism, man's wickedness deserving it, and God's providence permitting it, have prevailed, to the utter extirpation of Christianity, upon far the greater part of the world; and St. Augustine, when he was out of the heat of disputation, confesses the militant church to be like the moon, sometimes increasing, and sometimes decreasing. This, therefore, was no error in the Donatists, that they held it possible that the church, from a large extent, might be contracted to a lesser; nor that they held it possible to be reduced to Africa: (for why not to Afric then, as well as within these few ages you pretend it was to Europe?) but their error was, that they held *de facto*, this was done when they had no just ground or reason to do so; and so, upon a vain pretence which they could not justify, separated themselves from the communion of all other parts of the church; and that they required it as a necessary condition, to make a man a member of the church, that he should be of their communion, and divide himself from all other communions from which they were divided; which was a condition both unnecessary and unlawful to be required, and therefore the exacting of it was directly opposite to the church's catholicism; in the very same nature with their errors who required circumcision, and the keeping of the law of Moses, as necessary to salvation. For whoso-

ever requires harder or heavier conditions of men than God requires of them, he it is that is properly an enemy of the church's universality, by hindering either men or countries from adjoining themselves to it; which, were it not for these unnecessary and therefore unlawful conditions, in probability would have made them members of it. And seeing the present church of Rome persuades men they were as good (for any hope of salvation they have) not to be Christians, as not to be Roman catholics; believe nothing at all, as not believe all she imposes upon them; be absolutely out of the church's communion, as be out of her communion, or be in any other. Whether she be not guilty of the same crime with the Donatists, and those zealots of the Mosaical law, I leave it to the judgment of those that understand reason: this is sufficient to shew the vanity of this argument. But I add, moreover, that you neither have named those protestants who held the church to have perished for many ages, who perhaps held not the destruction, but the corruption, of the church; not that the true church, but that the pure church perished; or rather, that the church perished not from its life and existence, but from its purity and integrity, or perhaps from its splendour and visibility; neither have you proved by any one reason, but only affirmed it, to be a fundamental error to hold that the church militant may possibly be driven out of the world, and abolished for a time from the face of the earth.

65. But to accuse the church of any error in faith, is to say, she lost all faith: for this is the doctrine of catholic divines, that one error in faith destroys faith.—To which I answer, that to ac-

cuse the church of some error in faith, is not to say, she lost all faith: for this is not the doctrine of all catholic divines; but that he which is an heretic in one article, may have true faith of other articles. And the contrary is only said, and not shewed, in Charity Mistaken.

66. Ad. §. 21. Dr. Potter says—We may not depart from the church absolutely, and in all things—and from hence you conclude—therefore we may not depart from it in any thing: and this argument you call a demonstration. But, a fallacy *a dicto simpliciter ad dictum secundum quid*, was not used heretofore to be called a demonstration. Dr. Potter says not, that you may not depart from any opinion or any practice of the church; for you tell us in this very place, that he says, even the catholic may err; and every man may lawfully depart from error. He only says—you may not cease to be of the church, nor depart from those things which make it so to be; and from hence you infer a necessity of forsaking it in nothing.—Just as if you should argue thus: you may not leave your friend or brother, therefore you may not leave the vice of your friend, or the error of your brother. What he says of the catholic church, p. 75. the same he extends presently after to every true, though never so corrupted, part of it. And why do you not conclude from hence, that no particular church (according to his judgment) can fall into any error, and call this a demonstration too? For as he says, p. 75. that "there can be no just cause to depart from the whole church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself;" so, p. 76. he tells you, that "whosoever forsakes any one true member of the

body, forsakes the whole." So that what he says of the one, he says of the other; and tells you, that neither universal nor particular church, so long as they continue so, may be forsaken; he means absolutely, no more than Christ himself may be forsaken absolutely: for the church is the body of Christ, and whosoever forsakes either the body, or his coherence to any one part of it, must forsake his subordination and relation to the Head. Therefore, whosoever forsakes the church, or any Christian, must forsake Christ himself.

67. But then he tells you plainly, in the same place, that "it may be lawful and necessary to depart from a particular church in some doctrines and practices;" and this he would have said even of the catholic church, if there had been occasion; but there was none. For there he was to declare and justify our departure, not from the catholic church, but the Romans, which we maintain to be a particular church. But, in other places, you confess his doctrine to be, that even the catholic church may err in points not fundamental; which you do not pretend that he ever imputed to Christ himself. And therefore you cannot, with any candour, interpret his words as if he had said, we may not forsake the church in any thing, no more than Christ himself; but only thus—we may not cease to be of the church, nor forsake it absolutely and totally, no more than Christ himself: and thus we see, sometimes, a mountain may travail, and the production be a mouse.

68. Ad. §. 22. But—Dr. Potter either contradicts himself, or else must grant the church infallible; because he says, if we did not differ from the Roman, we could not agree with the catholic:

which saying supposes the catholic church cannot err.—*Ans.* This argument, to give it the right name, is an obscure and intricate nothing: and to make it appear so, let us suppose, in contradiction to your supposition, either that the catholic church may err, but doth not, but that the Roman actually doth; or that the catholic church doth err in some few things, but that the Roman errs in many more. And is it not apparent, in both these cases, (which yet both suppose the church's fallibility) a man may truly say, unless I dissent in some opinions from the Roman church, I cannot agree with the catholic: either, therefore, you must retract your imputation laid upon Dr. Potter, or do that which you condemn in him, and be driven to say, that the same man may hold some errors with the church of Rome, and at the same time with the catholic church, not to hold, but condemn them. For otherwise, in neither of these cases is it possible for the same man, at the same time, to agree both with the Roman and the catholic.

69. In all these texts of Scripture, which are here alleged in this last section of this chapter, or in any one of them, or in any other, doth God say clearly and plainly—The Bishop of Rome, and that society of Christians which adheres to him, shall be ever the infallible guide of faith? You will confess, I presume, he doth not, and will pretend it was not necessary. Yet if the King should tell us, the Lord-keeper should judge such and such causes; but should either not tell us at all, or tell us but doubtfully, who should be Lord-keeper, should we be any thing the nearer for him

the dissentions about the person who it is, increase contentions rather than end them? Just so it would have been, if God had appointed a church to be judge of controversies, and had not told us which was that church. Seeing, therefore, God doth nothing in vain, and seeing it had been in vain to appoint a judge of controversies, and not to tell us plainly who it is; and seeing, lastly, he hath not told us plainly, no not at all who it is; is it not evident he hath appointed none? *Obj.* But (you will say, perhaps) if it be granted once, that some church of one denomination is the infallible guide of faith, it will be no difficult thing to prove that yours is the church, seeing no other church pretends to be so. *Ans.* Yes, the primitive and the apostolic church pretends to be so. That assures us, that the Spirit was promised and given unto them, to lead them into all saving truth, that they might lead others. *Obj.* But that church is not now in the world, and how then can it pretend to be the guide of faith? *Ans.* It is now in the world sufficient to be our guide; not by the persons of those men that were members of it, but by their writings, which do plainly teach us, what truth they were led into, and so lead us into the same truth. *Obj.* But these writings were the writings of some particular men, and not of the church of those times; how then doth that church guide us by these writings? Now these places shew that a church is to be our guide, therefore they cannot be so avoided. *Ans.* If you regard the conception and production of these writings, they were the writings of particular men: but if you regard the reception and approbation of them, they may be

well called the writings of the church, as having the attestation of the church, to have been written by those that were inspired and directed by God. As a statute, though penned by some one man, yet being ratified by the parliament, is called the act, not of that man, but of the parliament. *Obj.* But the words seem clearly enough to prove, that the church, the present church of every age, is universally infallible. *Ans.* For my part I know I am as willing and desirous, that the bishop or church of Rome should be infallible, (provided I might know it) as they are to be so esteemed. But he that would not be deceived must take heed, that he take not his desire that a thing should be so, for a reason that it is so. For, if you look upon Scripture through such spectacles as these, they will appear to you, of what colour pleases your fancies best; and will seem to say, not what they do say, but what you would have them. As some say the manna, wherewith the Israelites were fed in the wilderness, had in every man's mouth that very taste which was most agreeable to his palate. For my part I profess, I have considered them a thousand times, and have looked upon them (as they say) on both sides, and yet to me they seem to say no such matter.

70. Not the First, For the church may err, and yet "the gates of hell not prevail against her." It may err, and yet continue still a true church, and bring forth children unto God, and send souls to heaven. And therefore this can do you no service, without the plain begging of the point in question, viz. that every error is one of the gates of hell; which we absolutely deny, and therefore, you are

not to suppose, but prove it. Neither is our denial without reason: for seeing you do and must grant that a particular church may hold some error, and yet be still a true member of the church; why may not the universal church hold the same error, and yet remain a true universal?

71. Not the second or third; for, the Spirit of truth may be with a man or a church for ever, and teach him all truth—and yet he may fall into some error, if this all be not simply all, but all *of* some kind; which you confess to be so unquestioned and certain, that you are offended with Dr. Potter for offering to prove it. Secondly, He may fall into some error, even contrary to the truth which is taught him, if it be taught him only sufficiently, and not irresistibly, so that he may learn it if he will, not so that he must and shall, whether he will or no. Now, who can ascertain me that the Spirit's teaching is not of this nature? or how can you possibly reconcile it with your doctrine of free-will in believing, if it be not of this nature? Besides, the word in the original is ὁδηγήσει, which signifies, to be a guide and director only, not to compel or necessitate. Who knows not, that a guide may set you in the right way, and you may either negligently mistake, or willingly leave it? And to what purpose does God complain so often and so earnestly of some that had eyes to see, and would not see; that stopped their ears, and closed their eyes, lest they should hear and see? Of others—that would not understand, least they should do good; that the light shined, and "the darkness comprehended it not; that he came unto his own, and his own received him not; that light came into the world, and men loved darkness

more than light:" to what purpose should he wonder so few believed his report, and that to so few his arm was revealed; and that when he comes, he should find no faith upon earth, if his outward teaching were not of this nature, that it might be followed, and might be resisted? And, if it be, then God may teach, and the church not learn; God may lead, and the church be refractory, and not follow. And, indeed, who can doubt, that hath not his eyes veiled with prejudice, that God hath taught the church of Rome plain enough in the Epistle to the Corinthians, that all things in the church are to be done for edification? and that, in any public prayers, or thanksgiving, or hymns, or lessons of instruction, to use a language, which the assistants generally understand not, is not for edification? Though the church of Rome will not learn this, for fear of confessing an error, and so overthrowing her authority; yet the time will come, when it shall appear, that not only by Scripture, they were taught sufficiently and commanded to believe it, but by reason and common sense. And so for the communion in both kinds, who can deny but they are taught it by our Saviour (John vi.) in these words, according to most of your own expositions: " Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you." (If our Saviour speaks there of the sacrament, as to them he doth, because they conceive he doth so.) For though they may pretend, that receiving in one kind, they receive the blood together with the body, yet they can with no face pretend that they drink it; and so obey not our Saviour's injunction according to the letter, which yet they profess is literally al-

ways to be obeyed, unless some impiety, or some absurdity, forces us to the contrary: and they are not yet arrived to that impudence to pretend, that either there is impiety or absurdity in receiving the communion in both kinds. This, therefore, they, if not others, are plainly taught by our Saviour in this place; but by St. Paul all, without exception, when he says, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this chalice." This (a man) that is to examine himself, is every man that can do it; as is confessed on all hands. And therefore it is all one, as if he had said, "Let every man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread, and drink of this cup." They which acknowledge St. Paul's epistles, and St. John's Gospel, to be the word of God, one would think should not deny, but that they are taught these two doctrines plain enough; yet we see they neither do, nor will, learn them. I conclude, therefore, that the Spirit may very well teach the church, and yet the church fall into and continue in error, by not regarding what she is taught by the Spirit.

72. But all this I have spoken upon a supposition only, and shewed unto you, that though these promises had been made unto the present church of every age, (I might have said, though they had been to the church of Rome by name) yet no certainty of her universal infallibility could be built upon them. But the plain truth is, that these promises are vainly arrogated by you, and were never made to you, but to the apostles only. I pray deal ingenuously, and tell me, who were they, of whom our Saviour says, "These things have I spoken unto you being present with you."

(Chap. xiv. 25.) "But the Comforter shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have told you." (Ver. 26.) Who are they to whom he says, "I go away, and come again unto you;" and, "I have told you before it came to pass." (Ver. 28, 29.) "You have been with me from the beginning." (Chap. xv. 27.) And again; "These things I have told you, that when the time shall come, you may remember that I told you of them: and these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you." (Chap. xvi. 4.) And, "Because I said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts." (Ver. 6.) Lastly, Who are they, of whom he saith, (ver. 12.) "I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot hear them now?" Do not all these circumstances appropriate this whole discourse of our Saviour to his disciples that were then with him; and, consequently, restrain the promises of the Spirit of truth, which was to lead them into all truth, to their persons only? And seeing it is so, is it not an impertinent arrogance and presumption, for you to lay claim unto them, in the behalf of your church? Had Christ been present with your church? Did the Comforter bring these things to the remembrance of your church, which Christ had before taught, and she had forgotten? Was Christ then departing from your church? and did he tell of his departure before it came to pass? Was your church with him from the beginning? Was your church filled with sorrow, upon the mentioning of Christ's departure? or, lastly, did he, or could he, have said to your church, which then was not extant, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot hear them

now?" as he speaks, in the 12th verse, immediately before the words by you quoted. And then goes on, "Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth." Is it not the same *you* he speaks to in the 13th verse, and that he speaks to in the 14th? and is it not apparent to any one that has but half an eye, that in the 13th verse he speaks only to them that then were with him? Besides, in the very text by you alleged, there are things promised, which your church cannot with any modesty pretend to: for there it is said, the Spirit of truth, not only will "guide you into all truth," but also will "shew you things to come." Now your church (for aught I could ever understand) doth not so much as pretend to the Spirit of prophecy and knowledge of future events; and, therefore, hath as little cause to pretend to the former promise of being led by the Spirit into all truth. And this is the reason, why both you in this place, and generally, your writers of controversies, when they treat of this argument, cite this text perpetually by halves; there being in the latter part of it a clear and convincing demonstration that you have nothing to do with the former. Unless you will say, which is most ridiculous, that when our Saviour said, "He will teach you," &c. and "he will shew you," &c. he meant one *you* in the former clause, and another *you* in the latter.

73. *Obj.* But this is to confine God's Spirit to the apostles only, or to the disciples, that then were present with him; which is directly contrary to many places of Scripture. *Ans.* I confess, that to confine the Spirit of God to those that were then present with Christ, is against Scrip-

ture. But I hope it is easy to conceive a difference between confining the Spirit of God to them, and confining the promises made in this place to them. God may do many things which he doth not promise at all: much more, which he doth not promise in such or such a place.

74. *Obj.* But it is promised in the 13th chap. —that this Spirit shall abide with them for ever: now they in their persons were not to abide for ever, and therefore the Spirit could not abide with them in their persons for ever, seeing the co-existence of two things supposes of necessity the existence of either. Therefore, the promise was not made to them only in their persons, but by them to the church, which was to abide for ever.—*Ans.* Your conclusion is, not to them only, but your reason concludes either nothing at all, or that this promise of abiding with them for ever was not made to their persons at all; or, if it were, that it was not performed; or, if you will not say (as I hope you will not) that it was not performed, nor that it was not made to their persons at all; then must you grant, that the words *for ever* are here used in a sense restrained, and accommodated to the subject here treated of; and that it signifies, *not eternally*, without end of time, *but perpetually*, without interruption, for the time of their lives: so that the force and sense of the words is, that they shall never want the Spirit's assistance in the performance of their functions: and that the Spirit would not (as Christ was to do) stay with them for a time, and afterwards leave them, but would abide with them, if they kept their station, unto the very end of their lives, which is man's *for ever*. Neither is this use of the

ords *for ever*, any thing strange, either in our ordinary speech, wherein we use to say—This is mine for ever—This shall be yours for ever, without ever dreaming of the eternity either of the thing or persons. And then in Scripture, it not only will bear, but requires this sense very frequently, as Exod. xxi. 6; Deut. xv. 17. "His master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever." Psal. lii. 9. "I will praise thee for ever." Psal. lxi. 4. "I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever." Psal. cxix. 111. "Thy testimonies have I taken as mine heritage for ever." And, lastly, in the Epistle to Philemon, "He therefore departed from thee for a time, that thou shouldst receive him for ever."

75. And thus, I presume, I have shewed sufficiently, that this *for ever* hinders not, but that the promise may be appropriated to the apostles, as by many other circumstances I have evinced it must be. But what now, if the place produced by you, as a main pillar of your church's infallibility, prove upon trial an engine to batter and overthrow it? at least, (which is all one to my purpose) to take away all possibility of our assurance of it? This will seem strange news to you at first hearing, and not far from a prodigy. And I confess, as you here, in this place, and generally all your writers of controversy, by whom this text is urged, order the matter, it is very much disabled to do any service against you in this question: for, with a bold sacrilege, and horrid impiety, somewhat like Procrustes' cruelty, you perpetually cut off the head and foot, the beginning and the end of it; and, presenting your confidents (who usually read no more of the Bible

than is alleged by you) only these words, "I will ask my Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth;" conceal, in the meantime, the words before and the words after; that so the promise of God's Spirit may seem to be absolute, whereas it is indeed most clearly and expressly conditional; being both in the words before restrained to those only that love God and keep his commandments; and, in the words after, flatly denied to all, whom the Scripture styles by the name of the *world;* that is, as the very antithesis gives us plainly to understand, to all wicked and worldly men. Behold the place entire, as it is set down in your own Bible: "If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will ask my Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive." Now, from the place thus restored and vindicated from your mutilation, thus I argue against your pretence. We can have no certainty of the infallibility of your church, but upon this supposition, that your popes are infallible in confirming the decrees of general councils: we can have no certainty hereof, but upon this supposition, that the Spirit of truth is promised to them for their direction of this work: and of this again we can have no certainty, but upon supposal, that they perform the condition whereunto the promise of the Spirit of truth is expressly limited, viz. that they "love God, and keep his commandments:" and of this, finally, not knowing the pope's heart, we can have no certainty at all; therefore, from the first to the last, we can have no certainty at all

of your church's infallibility. This is my first argument. From this place another follows, which will charge you as home as the former. If many of the Roman see were such men as could not receive the Spirit of truth, even men of the world, that is, worldly, wicked, carnal, diabolical men; then the Spirit of truth is not here promised, but flatly denied them; and consequently, we can have no certainty, neither of the decrees of councils, which the popes confirm, nor of the church's infallibility, which is guided by these decrees: but many of the Roman see, even by the confession of the most zealous defenders of it, were such men; therefore, the Spirit of truth is not here promised, but denied them, and consequently, we can have no certainty neither of the decrees which they confirm, nor of the church's infallibility, which guides herself by these decrees.

76. You may take as much time as you think fit to answer these arguments. In the meanwhile I proceed to the consideration of the next text alleged for this purpose by you, out of St. Paul, 1st Epist. to Timothy, where he saith, as you say, "the church is the pillar and ground of truth;" but the truth is, you are somewhat too bold with St. Paul; for he saith not in formal terms what you make him say, "the church is the pillar and ground of truth;" neither is it certain that he means so: for it is neither impossible nor improbable, that these words, "the pillar and ground of truth," may have reference not to the church, but to Timothy, the sense of the place—"that thou mayest know how to behave thyself, as a pillar and ground of the truth, in the church of God, which is the house of the living God;" which ex-

position offers no violence at all to the words, but only supposes an ellipsis of the particle ὡς, in the Greek very ordinary. Neither wants it some likelihood, that St. Paul, comparing the church to a house, should here exhort Timothy, to carry himself as a pillar in that house should do, according as he had given other principal men in the church the name of pillars; rather than having called the church a house, to call it presently a pillar; which may seem somewhat heterogeneous. Yet if you will needs have St. Paul refer this, not to Timothy, but to the church, I will not contend about it any farther, than to say, possibly it may be otherwise. But then, Secondly, I am to put you in mind, that the church, which St. Paul here speaks of, was that in which Timothy conversed, and that was a particular church, and not the Roman; and such you will not have to be universally infallible.

77. Thirdly, If we grant you, out of courtesy (for nothing can enforce us to it), that he both speaks of the universal church, and says this of it; then I am to remember you, that many attributes in Scripture are not notes of performance, but of duty, and teach us not what the thing or person is of necessity, but what it should be. "Ye are the salt of the earth," saith our Saviour to his disciples; not that this quality was inseparable from their persons, but because it was their office to be so. For, if they must have been so of necessity, and could not have been otherwise, in vain had he put them in fear of that which follows: "If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast forth, and trodden under foot." So the

church may be by duty "the pillar and ground;" that is, the teacher of truth, of all truth, not only necessary, but profitable to salvation; and yet she may neglect and violate this duty, and be in fact the teacher of some error.

78. Fourthly and lastly, If we deal most liberally with you, and grant that the apostle here speaks of the catholic church, calls it "the pillar and ground of truth," and that not only because it should, but because it always shall and will, be so, yet after all this you have done nothing; your bridge is too short to bring you to the bank where you would be, unless you can shew, that by truth here is certainly meant, not only all necessary to salvation, but all that is profitable, absolutely and simply all. For that the true church always shall be the maintainer and teacher of all necessary truth, you know we grant, and must grant; for it is of the essence of the church to be so; and any company of men were no more a church without it, than any thing can be a man, and not be reasonable. But as a man may be still a man, though he want a hand or an eye, which yet are profitable parts; so the church may be still a church, though it be defective in some profitable truth. And as a man may be a man that hath some biles and botches in his body; so the church may be the church, though it may have many corruptions both in doctrine and practice.

79. And thus you see we are at liberty from the former places; having shewed that the sense of them either must or may be such as will do your cause no service. But the last you suppose will be a Gordian knot, and tie us fast enough: the words are, "He gave some apostles, and some

prophets, &c. to the consummation of saints, to the work of the ministry, &c. until we all meet in the unity of faith, &c. That we be not hereafter children, wavering, and carried up and down with every wind of doctrine." Out of which words this is the only argument which you collect, or I can collect for you.

There is no means to conserve unity of faith, against every wind of doctrine, unless it be a church universally infallible.

But it is impious to say, there is no means to preserve unity of faith against every wind of doctrine:

Therefore there must be a church universally infallible.

Whereunto I answer, that your major is so far from being confirmed, that it is plainly confuted by the place alleged. For that tells us of another means for this purpose, to wit—the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and doctors, which Christ gave upon his ascension, and that their consummating the saints, doing the work of the ministry, and edifying the body of Christ, was the means, to bring those (which are there spoken of, be they who they will) to the unity of faith, and to perfection in Christ, that they might not be wavering, and carried about with every wind of false doctrine. Now the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and doctors, are not the present church; therefore the church is not the only means for this end, nor that which is here spoken of.

80. Peradventure by *he gave*, you conceive it to be understood—he promised that he would give unto the world's end. But what reason have you for this conceit? Can you shew that the word,

ἔδωκε hath this signification in other places, and that it must have it in this place? Or, will not this interpretation drive you presently to this blasphemous absurdity, that God hath not performed his promise? Unless you will say, which for shame I think you will not, that you have now, and in all ages since Christ, have had apostles, and prophets, and evangelists: for as for pastors and doctors alone, they will not serve the turn. For if God promised to give all these, then you must say he hath given all, or else that he hath broken his promise. Neither may you pretend, that the pastors and doctors were the same with the apostles and prophets, and evangelists, and therefore having pastors and doctors you have all. For it is apparent, that by these names are denoted several orders of men, clearly distinguished and diversified by the orginal texts; but much more plainly by your own translations, for so you read it—"some apostles, and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors:" and yet more plainly in the parallel place, 1 Cor. xii. to which we are referred by your vulgar tradition, "God hath set some in the church; first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly, teachers;" therefore this subterfuge is stopped against you. *Obj.* But how can they, which died in the first age, keep us in the unity, and guard us from error, that live now, perhaps in the last? This seems to be all one, as if a man should say, that Alexander or Julius Cæsar should quiet a mutiny in the King of Spain's army. *Ans.* I hope you will grant, that Hippocrates, and Galen, and Euclid, and Aristotle, and Salust, and Cæsar, and Livy, were dead many ages since;

and yet that we are now preserved from error by them, in a great part of physic, of geometry, of logic, of the Roman story. But what if these men had writ by Divine inspiration, and writ complete bodies of the sciences they professed, and writ them plainly and perspicuously; you would then have granted, I believe, that their works had been sufficient to keep us from error, and from dissention in these matters. And why then should it be incongruous to say, that the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, and pastors, and doctors, which Christ gave upon his ascension, by their writings, which some of them writ, but all approved, are even now sufficient means, to conserve us in unity of faith, and guard us from error? Especially, seeing these writings are, by the confession of all parts, true, and Divine, and, as we pretend and are ready to prove, contain a plain and perfect rule of faith; and, as the * chiefest of you acknowledge, "contain immediately all the principal and fundamental points of Christianity," referring us to the church and tradition only for some minute particularities. But, tell me, I pray, the bishops that composed the decrees of the council of Trent, and the pope that confirmed them, are the means to conserve you in unity, and keep you from error, or are they not? Peradventure you will say, their decrees are, but not their persons; but you will not deny, I hope, that you owe your unity and freedom from error to the persons that made these decrees; neither will you deny, that the writings which they have left behind them, are sufficient for this purpose. And

* Perron.

why may not then the apostles' writings be as fit for such purpose, as the decrees of your doctors? Surely their intent in writing was to conserve us in unity of faith, and to keep us from error, and we are sure God spake in them? But your doctors, from whence they are, we are not so certain. Was the Holy Ghost then unwilling, or unable, to direct them so, that their writing should be fit and sufficient to attain the end they aimed at in writing? for if he were both able and willing to do so, then certainly he did do so. And then their writings may be very sufficient means, if we would use them as we should do, to preserve us in unity, in all necessary points of faith, and to guard us from all pernicious error.

81. If yet you be not satisfied, but pretend, that all these words, by you cited, seem clearly enough to prove, that the church is universally infallible, without which unity of faith could not be conserved against every wind of doctrine; I answer, that to you which will not understand, that there can be any means to conserve the unity of faith, but only that which conserves your authority over the faithful, it is no marvel that these words seem to prove that the church, nay that your church, is universally infallible. But we that have no such end, no such desires, but are willing to leave all men to their liberty, provided they will not improve it to a tyranny over others, we find it no difficulty to discern between *dedit* and *promisit*—he gave at his ascension, and he promised to the world's end. Besides, though you, whom it concerns, may haply flatter yourselves, that you have not only pastors, and doctors, but prophets, and apostles, and evangelists, and those distinct from

the former, still in your church; yet we that are disinterested persons, cannot but smile at these strange imaginations. Lastly, Though you are apt to think yourselves such necessary instruments for all good purposes, and that nothing can be well done unless you do it; that no unity or constancy in religion can be maintained, but inevitably Christendom must fall to ruin and confusion, unless you support it; yet we that are indifferent, and impartial, and well content that God should give us his own favours, by means of his own appointment, not of our choosing, can easily collect out of these very words, that not the infallibility of your's, or of any church, but the apostles, and prophets, and evangelists, &c. which Christ gave upon his ascension, were designed by him, for the compassing all these excellent purposes, by their preaching while they lived, and by their writings for ever. And if they fail hereof, the reason is not any insufficiency or invalidity in the means, but the voluntary perverseness of the subjects they have to deal with; who, if they would be themselves, and be content that others should be, in the choice of their religion, the servants of God, and not of men; if they would allow, that the way to heaven is not narrower now than Christ left it, his yoke no heavier than he made it; that the belief of no more difficulties is required now to salvation, than was in the primitive church; that no error is in itself destructive and exclusive from salvation now, which was not then; if, instead of being zealous papists, earnest Calvinists, rigid Lutherans, they would become themselves, and be content that others should be, plain and honest Christians; if all men would believe the Scripture,

and, freeing themselves from prejudice and passion, would sincerely endeavour to find the true sense of it, and live according to it, and require no more of others but to do so; nor denying their communion to any that do so, would so order their public service of God, that all which do so may, without scruple, or hypocrisy, or protestation against any part of it join with them in it: who doth not see that seeing (as we suppose here, and shall prove hereafter) all necessary truths are plainly and evidently set down in Scripture, there would of necessity be among all men, in all things necessary, unity of opinion? and, notwithstanding any other differences that are, or could be, unity of communion, and charity, and mutual toleration? by which means all schism and heresy would be banished the world, and those wretched contentions which now rend and tear in pieces, not the coat, but the members and bowels of Christ, with mutual pride and tyranny, and cursing, and killing, and damning, would fain make immortal, should speedily receive a most blessed catastrophe. But of this hereafter, when we shall come to the question of schism, wherein I persuade myself, that I shall plainly shew, that the most vehement accusers are the greatest offenders, and that they are indeed, at this time, the greatest schismatics who make the way to heaven narrower, the yoke of Christ heavier, the differences of faith greater, the conditions of ecclesiastical communion harder and stricter, than they were made at the beginning by Christ and his apostles: they who talk of unity, but aim at tyranny, and will have peace with none but with their slaves and vassals. In the meanwhile,

though I have shewed how unity of faith, and unity of charity too, may be preserved without your church's infallibility, yet seeing you modestly conclude from hence, not that your church is, but only seems to be, universally infallible, meaning to yourself, of which you are a better judge than I: therefore I willingly grant your conclusion, and proceed.

82. Whereas you say, that Dr. Potter limits those promises and privileges to fundamental points; the truth is, with some of them he meddles not at all, neither doth his adversary give him occasion: not with those out of the Epistle to Timothy, and to the Ephesians. To the rest he gives other answer besides this.

83. But the words of Scripture by you alleged are universal, and mention no such restraint to fundamentals as Dr. Potter applies to them.—I answer, that, of the five texts which you allege, four are indefinite, and only one universal, and that you confess is to be restrained, and are offended with Dr. Potter for going about to prove it. And whereas you say, they mention no restraint, intimating that therefore they are not to be restrained, I tell you, this is no good consequence; for it may appear out of the matter and circumstances, that they are to be understood in a restrained sense, notwithstanding no restraint be mentioned. That place quoted by St. Paul, and applied by him to our Saviour, "He hath put all things under his feet," mentions no exception; yet St. Paul tells us, not only that it is true or certain, but "it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under him."

84. But your interpretation is better than Dr.

Potter's, because it is literal.—I answer, his is literal as well as your's: and you are mistaken if you think a restrained sense may not be a literal sense; for to restrained, literal is not opposed, but unlimited or absolute; and to literal is not opposed restrained, but figurative.

85. Whereas you say, Dr. Potter's brethren, rejecting his limitation, restrain the mentioned texts to the apostles—implying hereby a contrariety between them and him. I answer, so doth Dr. Potter restrain all of them which he speaks of, in the pages by you quoted, to the apostles, in the direct and primary sense of the words: though he tells you there, the words in a more restrained sense are true, being understood of the church universal.

86. As for your pretence, that—to find the meaning of those places, you confer divers texts, you consult originals, you examine translations, and use all the means by protestants appointed. I have told you before, that all this is vain and hypocritical, if (as your manner and your doctrine is) you give not yourselves liberty of judgment in the use of these means; if you make not yourselves judges of, but only advocates for, the doctrine of your church, refusing to see what these means shew you, if it any way make against the doctrine of your church, though it be as clear as the light at noon. Remove prejudice, even the balance, and hold it even, make it indifferent to you which way you go to heaven so you go the true, which religion be true so you be of it, then use the means, and pray for God's assistance, and as sure as God is true, you shall be led into all necessary truth.

87. Whereas you say—you neither do, nor have, any possible means to agree, as long as you are

left to yourselves: the first is very true, that while you differ you do not agree. But for the second, that you have no possible means of agreement, as long as you are left to yourselves, *i. e.* to your own reasons and judgment, this sure is very false, neither do you offer any proof of it, unless you intend this, that you do not agree, for a proof that you cannot; which sure is no good consequence, nor half so good as this which I oppose against it. Dr. Potter and I, by the use of these means by you mentioned, do agree, concerning the sense of these places, therefore there is a possible means of agreement; and therefore you, also, if you would use the same means, with the same minds, might agree so far as it is necessary, and it is not necessary that you should agree farther. Or if there be no possible means to agree about the sense of these texts, whilst we are left to ourselves, then sure it is impossible that we should agree in your sense of them, which was, that the church is universally infallible. For if it were possible for us to agree in this sense of them, then it were possible for us to agree. And why then said you of the self-same texts but in the page next before, "These words seem clearly enough to prove that the church is universally infallible." A strange forgetfulness, that the same man, almost in the same breath, should say of the same words, they seem clearly enough to prove such a conclusion true, and yet that three indifferent men, all presumed to be lovers of truth, and industrious searchers of it, should have no possible means, while they follow their own reason, to agree in the truth of this conclusion!

88. Whereas you say, that—It were great im-

piety to imagine that God, the lover of souls, hath left no certain infallible means to decide both this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion—I desire you to take heed you commit not an impiety in making more impieties than God's commandments make. Certainly, God is no way obliged, either by his promise or his love, to give us all things that we may imagine would be convenient for us, as formerly I have proved at large. It is sufficient that he denies us nothing necessary to salvation. *Deus non deficit in necessariis, nec redundat in superfluis*: so Dr. Stapleton. But that the ending of all controversies, or having a certain means of ending them, is necessary to salvation, that you have often said and supposed, but never proved, though it be the main pillar of your whole discourse. So little care you take how slight your foundations are, so your building make a fair shew: and as little care, how you commit those faults yourself, which you condemn in others. For you here charge them with great impiety, who imagine that God, the lover of souls, hath left no infallible means to determine all differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion: and yet afterwards being demanded by Dr. Potter, why the questions between the Jesuits and Dominicans remain undetermined? you return him this cross interrogatory, who hath assured you that the point, wherein these learned men differ, is a revealed truth, or capable of definition; or is it not rather by plain Scripture indeterminable, or by any rule of faith? So then when you say, it were great impiety to imagine that God hath not left infallible

means to decide all differences; I may answer, it seems you do not believe yourself. For in this controversy, which is of as high consequence as any can be, you seem to be doubtful whether there be any means to determine it. On the other side, when you ask Dr. Potter, who assured him that there is any means to determine this controversy? I answer for him, that you have; in calling it a great impiety to imagine that there is not some infallible means to decide this and all other differences arising about the interpretation of Scripture, or upon any other occasion. For what trick you can devise to shew that this difference between the Dominicans and Jesuits, which includes a difference about the sense of many texts of Scripture, and many other matters of moment, was not included under this, and all other differences, I cannot imagine. Yet if you can find out any, thus much at least we shall gain by it, that general speeches are not always to be understood generally, but sometimes with exceptions and limitations.

89. But if there be any infallible means to decide all differences, I beseech you name them. You say it is to consult and hear God's visible church with submissive acknowledgment of her infallibility. But suppose the difference be (as here it is) whether your church be infallible, what shall decide that? If you would say (as you should do) Scripture and reason, then you foresee that you should be forced to grant, that these are fit means to decide this controversy, and therefore may be as fit to decide others. Therefore, to avoid this, you run into a most ridiculous absurdity, and tell us, that this difference also, whether

the church be infallible, as well as others, must be agreed by a submissive acknowledgment of the church's infallibility; as if you should have said, My brethren, I perceive this is a great contention among you, whether the Roman church be infallible? If you will follow my advice, I will shew you a ready means to end it; you must first agree that the Roman church is infallible, and then your contention, whether the Roman church be infallible, will quickly be at an end. Verily, a most excellent advice, and most compendious way of ending all controversies, even without troubling the church to determine them! For why may not you say in all other differences as you have done in this? Agree that the pope is supreme head of the church; that the substance of the bread and wine, in the sacrament, is turned into the body and blood of Christ; that the communion is to be given to laymen but in one kind; that pictures may be worshipped; that saints are to be invocated; and so in the rest: and then your differences about the pope's supremacy, transubstantiation, and all the rest, will speedily be ended. If you say, the advice is good in this, but not in other cases, I must request you, not to expect always to be believed upon your word, but to shew us some reason, why any one thing, namely, the church's infallibility, is fit to prove itself; and any other thing, by name the pope's supremacy, or transubstantiation, is not as fit? Or if for shame you will at length confess, that the church's infallibility is not fit to decide this difference, whether the church be infallible, then you must confess it is not fit to decide all: unless you will say it may be fit to decide all, and yet not fit to decide this,

or pretend that this is not comprehended under all. Besides, if you grant that your church's infallibility cannot possibly be well grounded upon, or decided by itself, then having professed before, that there is no possible means besides this, for us to agree hereupon, I hope you will give me leave to conclude, that it is impossible upon good ground for us to agree that the Roman church is infallible. For certainly, light itself is not more clear than the evidence of this syllogism:

If there be no other means to make men agree upon your church's infallibility, but only this, and this be no means; then it is simply impossible for men upon good grounds to agree that your church is infallible:

But there is (as you have granted) no other possible means to make men agree hereupon, but only a submissive acknowledgment of her infallibility; and this is apparently no means;

Therefore it is simply impossible for men upon good grounds to agree that your church is infallible.

90. Lastly, to the place of St. Augustine, wherein we are advised to follow the way of catholic discipline, which from Christ himself by the apostles hath come down even to us, and from us shall descend to all posterity—I answer, that the way which St. Augustine speaks of, and the way which you commend, being diverse ways, and in many things clean contrary, we cannot possibly follow them both; and therefore, for you to apply the same words to them is a vain equivocation. Shew us any way, and do not say, but prove it to have come from Christ and his apostles down to us, and we are ready to follow it. Neither do we

expect demonstration hereof, but such reasons as may make this more probable than the contrary. But if you bring in things into your now catholic discipline, which Christians in St. Augustine's time held abominable, (as the picturing of God,) and which you must, and some of you do confess to have come into the church seven hundred years after Christ: if you will bring in things, as you have done the half communion, with a *non obstante*, notwithstanding Christ's institution, and the practice of the primitive church were to the contrary: if you will do such things as these, and yet would have us believe, that your whole religion came from Christ and his apostles, this we conceive a request too unreasonable for modest men to make, or for wise men to grant.

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